THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL GROUP LTD

EAL Policy

(English as an Additional Language)

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Date:	**13th November 2026**
To be reviewed:	**September 2027**
Reviewed:	**Apr'19, Oct'19, Feb '20, Sept '20, May'21, Sept '22, Nov 23; Sept 24; July 25; Nov '26;**
Version:	**10**

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What is EAL?

EAL means English as an Additional Language – when a pupil speaks a home language other than English.

We are committed to providing appropriate and personalised support for all our pupils, including those with EAL. We give all pupils the opportunity to improve their fluency in speaking, reading, writing and understanding English.

Definitions of an EAL Learner:

“First language is the language to which the child was initially exposed during early development and continues to use this language at home and in the community. If a child acquires English subsequent to early development, then English is not their first language no matter how proficient in it they become”

Bilingual Learner:

“Bilingual here is taken to mean all pupils who use or have access to more than one language at home or at school – it does not necessarily imply fluency in both or all languages”

Advanced Bilingual Leaner:

“Advanced Bilingual learners are pupils who have had all or most of their school education in the UK and whose oral proficiency in English is usually indistinguishable from that of pupils with English as a first language, but whose writing may still show distinctive features related to the language background”

Planning and Teaching for pupils with EAL needs:

Teachers consider the needs of bilingual learners in their planning and teaching. Each pupil at TAS has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Pupil Profile. The pupil’s IEP/Pupil Profile will highlight any areas in which the pupil needs additional support. Pupils are encouraged to work independently, in groups and as a whole class, as well as explore their learning styles. Pupils are encouraged to share languages with their peers.

Key Principles for pupils with EAL needs:

- Language is central to our identity. Therefore, the home language of all pupils and staff should be recognised and valued. Pupils are encouraged to maintain their home language and use it in the school environment.
- Where possible, use other pupils/adults who use the same home language as pupils with EAL needs.
- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- Ensure that pupils with EAL needs are supported with good English-speaking role models.
- Use as many visual prompts as possible and communication friendly practices.

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Strategies for working with pupils new to English:

- Provide lots of hands-on experience so that pupils can learn the new language through participating in activities that support cognitive development.
- Teach pupils with limited English useful words and phrases to help them communicate.
- Provide additional visual support for pupils with EAL needs such as picture cards, visual timetables and posters.
- Have clear learning objectives in lessons and use appropriate resources.
- Display positive images of people from ethnic minorities.
- Utilise pictures, practical demonstration, physical resources and computer technology/i-pads to support learning and assist with the translation of words.

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