

ST MARGARET'S

SCHOOL

Policy for English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Last amended: September 2019
To be reviewed: September 2021

Introduction

St Margaret's School is committed to providing the highest standard of education enabling each pupil to achieve to the very best of her potential. We aim to provide a curriculum that is accessible to the individual needs of all our pupils. English is regarded as a fundamental tool that should be available to all students as an entitlement and one that enables them to reach their full potential during their school career and beyond.

The EAL Policy is designed to help those bilingual or multilingual learners who have a native language other than English and who need additional support in English in order to access the curriculum and pursue their studies effectively.

EAL students at St Margaret's come from a range of ethnic, economic and linguistic backgrounds. Most of them are boarders and have little previous experience of the UK or Europe. Some students arrive at the School having had a certain amount of exposure to the English language and culture; most are literate in their home language. Some children who speak English, whose parents speak English and are bilingual may, because of their bilingualism, require staff to be vigilant of their communication, language and literacy needs.

It is the policy of this school that EAL students have access to the whole school curriculum and to the full range of co-curricular activities the school provides. Exceptional circumstances which may affect such access will be dealt with on an individual basis in consultation with the EAL Coordinator, Head of Year, parents and student.

St Margaret's school aims promote an ethos of celebrating the positive contribution made by the cultural and linguistic diversity of its school community. We are committed to all students being fully integrated into the school and due regard will be paid to individual needs, in consultation with parents, teachers and external agencies.

Admission arrangements

EAL students should have an equal opportunity to join St Margaret's school if they satisfy the School's selection procedures. Parents/Guardians will be required to identify the student's home language on the application form.

All international students whose first language is not English are assessed soon after their entry to St Margaret's to determine their level of competence in English. This assessment takes into account their English (EAL) entrance examination taken prior to their arrival in the school and any examination qualifications together with academic reports supplied by their previous school. The entrance examination may be administered abroad by approved agencies or by representatives of St Margaret's

School. In addition, where possible arrangements are made to assess an individual candidate's suitability by interview via Skype and video conferencing.

Entrance to St Margaret's sixth form (Years 12 and 13 - 16+ years) is based on our own entrance examinations for entrance to the sixth form, as at any other level. In addition, to ensure that pupils will be able to study effectively for A-level examinations, candidates may be required to provide evidence of passing IELTS to at least level 5 (in all skills), or its equivalent such as IGCSE English, grade C. However, the Headmistress may choose to supersede these requirements and award discretionary places based on other factors such as Skype or face-to-face interviews, together with further internal assessment, as deemed appropriate.

St Margaret's School aims to:

- Ensure that all EAL students are working towards being able to use English independently and confidently.
- Facilitate EAL students' equal access to the curriculum and achievement of their educational potential.
- Assist departments in supporting EAL students in their acquisition of English language skills across the curriculum.
- Assess and monitor progress of EAL students in their acquisition of English language skills across the curriculum.
- Provide our EAL students with a safe, welcoming, nurturing environment where they are accepted, valued and encouraged to participate.
- Encourage celebration of the culture of EAL students.

Assessment and Monitoring of EAL Students

- EAL students are assessed before admission to the school through the English Entrance examination for EAL students.
- In their first term at St Margaret's, after they have settled in, students are assessed to further establish their language skill levels and to assist in appropriate EAL provision.
- Names of EAL students will be recorded on an EAL register. The EAL register will be shared with all staff (teaching and non-teaching) so that the EAL students' needs are recognised and addressed appropriately and effectively.
- Strategies to support EAL students will be shared with staff through training and the school shared documents.
- Most EAL students needing additional support do not have SEN. However, should these needs be identified during assessment, students will have equal access to school SEN provision. Similarly, there may be EAL students who are More Able or Talented even though they may not be fully fluent in English.

Provision and Intervention for EAL students

- Timetabled provision during the school day is as follows:
KS1&2: up to 2 lessons a week.

KS3: up to 1-2 lessons/week

KS4: 6 lessons/week in preparation for IGCSE English Second Language

KS5: 2-3 lessons/week in preparation for IELTS and university interviews.

- For advanced EAL learners who no longer require regular EAL lessons after achieving GCSE or IGCSE, occasional interventions are made when subject teachers note a failure to thrive.
- Staff are expected to consult the EAL register for the students they teach. Further information on individual students is available on request and St Margaret's staff are encouraged to work closely with the EAL specialists to help them plan appropriately for individual EAL learners. Teaching staff collaborate to ensure each student is given due consideration and additional help throughout their career at St Margaret's School. All staff whether pastoral, EAL or subject teaching staff, work closely together, regularly discussing individual students, sharing professional opinions and advice in order to optimise students' learning and to address any issues that may arise.
- Students are encouraged to speak English throughout the day and also to join in with the full range of extra-curricular opportunities at St Margaret's, since immersion in the language and also social and recreational opportunities outside lessons also constitute an important part of these EAL students' experience of English.
- Additional EAL activities are sometimes arranged after school by our boarding assistants (e.g. watch TV together & discuss) and students are encouraged to take part in these.

EAL Curriculum

The number of EAL lessons per week will vary depending on individual student needs and timetable constraints.

The EAL lessons attended by EAL students ostensibly prepare them to take various EAL examinations. However, the syllabus of each year group includes academic study skills work which supports the students across the curriculum. Furthermore, some courses have specific cross-curricular content such as the IELTS and the IGCSE second language courses. As the development of language skills is closely associated with cultural integration, the syllabus content includes cultural studies work. Additional English support may also help the pupils participate in a wide variety of curricular and extracurricular activities (such as MUN debating and other public speaking challenges).

Arrangements for coordinating provision for EAL students:

The EAL Co-ordinator is responsible for overseeing arrangements for the implementation and coordination of the EAL policy and for managing the team of colleagues who contribute to EAL provision. The EAL teachers offer individual and small-group support to pupils and deliver the specific EAL curriculum.

All staff are responsible for supporting EAL students in their learning within the classroom setting. Teachers have a crucial role in modelling the use of language.

Monitoring, Reviewing and Evaluation

Individual subject teachers undertake monitoring of student performance in line with department and school policy by marking of classwork, homework and tests, together with formal assessments and examinations in their subject area.

Subject teachers keep records to demonstrate student progress and produce written reports with targets and advice for the students.

Form Tutors and Heads of Year review student progress and liaise with the EAL Coordinator with regard to students presenting ongoing difficulties or underachievement.

The EAL teachers monitor EAL pupils' progress and advise on the level of English support required at each stage.

Junior School

EAL learners in the Junior School are assessed by their teachers and provision made according to individual needs. It is important that all pupils are enabled to access all aspects of the curriculum in order to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes which are necessary for their self-fulfilment and development.

In the Junior School EAL pupils are given a wide range of visual and practical play based and appropriate academic activities to ensure they have opportunities to learn and make progress. Through differentiation and support the School:

- ensures that vocabulary work covers the technical as well as the everyday meaning of key words, metaphors and idioms.
- explains how speaking and writing in English are structured for different purposes across a range of subjects.
- provides a range of reading materials that highlight the different ways in which English is used.
- ensures that there are effective opportunities for talking, and that talking is used to support writing.
- encourages pupils to transfer their knowledge, skills and understanding of one language to another.
- provides a range of opportunities for children to engage in speaking and listening activities in English with peers and adults.