

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy



CATERHAM
SCHOOL

Policy Author:

Elisabeth Gibbs, Head of EAL

Date Reviewed By Author:

September 2026

Next Review Due:

September 2027

Policy for Pupils for whom English is an Additional Language

Statement of Aims

The School is committed to making appropriate provision of teaching and resources for pupils for whom English is an Additional Language.

The school will identify individual pupils' needs at the earliest opportunity, recognise the skills they bring to the school and ensure equality of access to the whole curriculum. We aim to ensure that all EAL pupils are able to:

- Use English as a means to learning across the curriculum
- Use English confidently and competently
- Where appropriate, make use of their knowledge of other languages

The EAL department – Senior School

For pupils who would benefit from assistance, the EAL department provides courses to develop English language skills and communicative ability. Through structured course content, pupils are assisted in both skills and language development. The aims of the department are to enhance the pupils' language proficiency and build confidence to help them achieve both academic and social success in an English-speaking environment.

The department consists of two fulltime members of staff, providing EAL support across all years. In the First to Third Year, pupils follow general English courses subject to individual need and have the opportunity in the Fourth and Fifth Year to take IGCSE English as a Second Language. In the Sixth Form, all international pupils attend a preparation course leading to the IELTS Academic exam, an essential qualification in their university application process.

In the Lower School, where needed, non-native speakers of English receive up to 3 lessons a week of EAL tuition, in addition to their mainstream English classes. In Fourth and Fifth Year, those who would not benefit from attempting IGCSE English First Language and Literature follow IGCSE English as a Second Language courses, receiving 5 and 6 timetabled sessions respectively. Sixth Form pupils attend 2 periods of IELTS classes per week. This is minimum provision and individual lessons are provided according to individual need. In addition, the department aims to assist pupils with specific needs through offering support in IGCSE English First Language classes, subject specific support and preparation for university interviews in the Sixth Form.

As far as possible, EAL lessons take place within the regular timetable. However, due to timetable constraints some lessons take place during lunch times and after school and for the Sixth Form on Saturday mornings.

Assessment of Needs

International pupils sit a rigorous entrance exam to assess their English language ability and suitability for academic study at Caterham. If completed to a high standard, individuals are invited to attend an online interview; in the case of Sixth Form entry, other departmental heads may attend as necessary. Only pupils who show evidence of very good communicative competence are selected.

Subsequently, upon arrival at Caterham School, the new pupils are retested to reassess their English language level and language needs. These placement tests are sat prior to the start of the Autumn Term during the pupils' induction programme and consist of an interview with an EAL member of staff as well as a written piece in order to assess both types of communicative ability. In the case of new Lower Sixth pupils, a full IELTS Academic mock test is undertaken in the first weeks of term.

The results of the assessments inform placement of the pupils into appropriate classes. At Caterham we aim to group pupils according to ability. Once grouped, the pupils are assessed more informally in class during the first week of term and any amendments to settings can be made.

Pupil needs are continually monitored with regular discussions on pupil progress within the department. Feedback from HoDs, subject teachers, tutors and boarding staff is also requested to flag any pupils who may be struggling and to inform EAL provision.

In addition, pupils sit more formal, internal English examinations to monitor attainment. Combined with teacher assessment, these results highlight pupils capable of transferring to the IGCSE English First Language programme in the Fourth Year and those pupils more suited to following the Second Language course.

Teaching and Learning

We aim to keep class sizes small and grouped according to ability to best meet the needs of our pupils. As a result we hope to encourage a relaxed and friendly learning environment where pupils can grow in confidence, where mistakes are accepted and viewed as an essential stage in language acquisition and where relationships can be built that allow pupils to feel comfortable expressing themselves in English and exploring the communicative possibilities of the language.

EAL lessons aim to be engaging and interactive. Topics are chosen that aim to appeal to teenagers and a variety of activities are selected within a lesson to maintain pace and meet the needs of differing learning styles within the groups. Each year group follows a course book, which is supplemented with additional material. All pupils are also encouraged to read extensively, receiving an age-specific reading list on acceptance of their place then via the library where they can find a plethora of material from extremely dedicated and

knowledgeable staff. A typical lesson would comprise whole group discussions, pair work and individual work.

Emphasis is on the phrasal nature of the English language, so in our approach to teaching EAL, pupils are encouraged to study natural phrases and collocations presented in context. We aim to teach language in context, often using reading texts as a stimulus (stories, magazine articles etc), which assists comprehension and communicates meaning more accurately.

Pupils receive regular feedback on their attainment and performance either orally and through whole class error correction or individually through written comments.

In addition to teaching English, we are perfectly poised to implement the school's Fundamental British Values policy and we aim to enrich our pupils' cultural experiences not only through visits during curriculum time, but also through a close relationship with the Boarding team giving access to their very wide variety of trips.

INTERNATIONAL PUPILS: UNIVERSITY ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

All international pupils leave Caterham School with either:

- IGCSE First Language English, or
- IGCSE English as a Second Language, as well as
- an unexpired IELTS score equal to or greater than their chosen universities' course requirement, either published on the university website or individually requested by the university.

The above are all subject to changes and/or individual requests from either universities or the UKBA.