



SPGS
INTERNATIONAL

SPGS International School Chengdu

EAL Policy



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EAL Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This policy explains SPGSI Chengdu's provision for students who are learning English as an additional language. The UK government defines EAL learners as:

'A first language, where it is other than English, is recorded where a child was exposed to the language during early development and continues to be exposed to this language in the home or in the community.'

(DfESchoolCensusGuide2016-2017,2016p.63)

These students, whose first language is not English, are referred to in this policy as EAL students.

2. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

2.1 This policy is based on the following underlying principles:

- EAL students are entitled to the same educational opportunities and success enjoyed by English speaking students.
- EAL students' needs vary. We therefore provide a range of different teaching and learning activities to meet the demands of the curriculum and of students' individual learning needs and styles.
- The multilingualism of our EAL students deepens and enriches our school and our community.
- Students may require long-term support: it is often a long-term process to become fully competent in the use of curriculum and academic English. The nature of that support will change as each student becomes more proficient.
- Having a home language other than English is not a 'learning difficulty'. EAL students are not placed on an SEN register or taught in learning support unless they have additional learning needs.
- When EAL students are taken out of class for EAL, which classes they are taken out of will depend on what will be least disruptive to their overall learning. This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- Although the EAL department will take the lead in developing EAL student's English, it is the responsibility of all staff to support EAL students in the acquisition of English language skills.

3. AIMS

3.1 We aim to ensure we meet the needs of all those children learning English as an Additional Language who require extra support to access the curriculum, by demonstrating good practice of EAL teaching as highlighted by organisations such as The British Council and The Bell Foundation.

3.2 In particular, we aim to:

- Support students to overcome language barriers to learning, achievement and social inclusion.
- Minimise where possible the impact of EAL classes so that they may participate as fully as possible in the curriculum
- Raise EAL students' levels of English to a standard where they no longer need EAL support and can return to their class full-time.
- To provide our EAL students with a safe, welcoming and nurturing environment where they are accepted, valued and encouraged to participate.

3.3 EAL Objectives – school

- To ensure that all EAL students are supported by appropriately planning and preparing curricular provision.
- To implement school-wide strategies to ensure that all EAL students are able to participate in all aspects of school life.
- To support all EAL students to attain curriculum levels and public examination grades appropriate to their abilities, by developing their confidence and fluency in speaking and listening, reading, and writing in English.
- To identify and use opportunities for modelling fluent English.
- To seek, make use of and provide appropriate advice, guidance support and training to teaching colleagues.
- To monitor and assess on a regular basis the progress of EAL students in their acquisition of English.
- To monitor EAL students' general achievement and of their attainment in assessments and exams.
- To encourage and enable parental support in improving attainment.

3.4 EAL Objectives – students

3.4.1. To give EAL students the knowledge and skills to:

- Use English with confidence and fluency in a variety of curriculum and social contexts.
- Use English to understand and produce written texts.
- Use a variety of strategies to enhance understanding and to express meaning clearly.
- Return to their full-time mainstream classes at the earliest opportunity, and ideally no longer than one academic year, once the EAL department and teaching staff agree that a satisfactory level of English has been attained. Students will be re-tested after one month to assess a satisfactory level.

4. CONTEXT

- 4.1 SPGSI School Chengdu is an international school that follows the English National Curriculum from Year 1-11 and offers a co-educational experience to students in primary and secondary. As with all international schools, we have a number of students who need EAL support. They come from a variety of backgrounds with widely varying degrees of EAL needs.
- 4.2 Most of our EAL students have Chinese as their first language, although there are cohorts of other students from a wide range of other countries which means the school has complex EAL needs. Depending on their level of language skills, some students in Years 10 and 11 (CEFR 1 and below) will study GCSE English as a Second Language, as proof of English proficiency. More suited for those whose first language is not English; this qualification is specifically for those who have a working knowledge of the language from studying through the English-medium. Focusing primarily on practical communication for everyday use in a range of situations and developing skills such as information retrieval, note-taking, summary writing, reading comprehension and composition writing, it will build their awareness of the nature of language and the four language-learning skills.
- 4.3 Students in Key Stage 5 also have the opportunity to study for the IELTS Academic exam for UCAS or visa purposes for undergraduate study on foundation/undergraduate degrees in international universities e.g., UK, USA. Weekly IELTS lessons will take place, last approximately two terms in length and will lead to an optional end-of-course external exam taken through the British Council. Students are also taught 'English for Academic Purposes' which focuses on providing students with the necessary academic skills to confidently enter degree programmes in a native speaking country. The course will support them in areas such as essay writing, using sources and referencing, note-taking, giving presentations, critical thinking and what to expect at university etc.
- 4.4 All teachers are encouraged to have some knowledge and understanding of the backgrounds and cultures of the EAL students supported in the school in order to establish positive, respectful and understanding staff/student relationships. This is supported by studying specific EAL focused courses as part of TES Develop provision.

5. KEY PRINCIPLES FOR SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

- 5.1 The basic principles of language acquisition at SPGSI School Chengdu are on building self-confidence, introducing the English language with ease, building vocabulary, and developing the learning process by creating interest in the language itself. All our teachers aim to integrate the teaching of content and language simultaneously, enabling our EAL students to successfully access the curriculum and be able to express and record what they know.

5.2 Inclusivity

Inclusivity gives all students equitable opportunities to receive effective educational services, with the required aids and support, where apt in age-appropriate classrooms, for them to access the curriculum and thrive. The school recognises that most EAL children needing additional support do not have Additional Learning Needs (ALN). However, should a specific learning difficulty be identified, EAL children will have equal access to the school's ALN provision. If EAL students are identified as More Able or Talented, they will have the same opportunities as any other More Able or Talented student within the school.

6. WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH FOR SUPPORTING EAL STUDENTS

6.1 Overview

- Recognise the child's mother tongue and boost the child's self-esteem.
- Identify the child's strengths and acknowledge the time it takes to become fluent in an additional language.
- Students who receive assistance with EAL will be fully integrated into school life and will be provided with appropriate support as required.
- All teaching rooms to be socially and intellectually inclusive, valuing cultural differences and fostering a range of individual identities.
- English is the language of the school. Other than in very specific circumstances, all teaching in the Senior School is carried out in English and all students are encouraged and expected to converse in English throughout the school day.
- In the Junior School, all subjects (apart from Chinese lessons) are taught in English. Children are also expected to use English to communicate with the teacher and each other in these lessons. If a child is beginning to learn English and needs support in lessons, key words will be translated to aid their understanding. During recess, lunch times and outside of lessons, the children are encouraged to speak English as much as they can.
- For most of their timetable, students needing EAL support participate in the same classes as their classmates. All staff are responsible for helping EAL students become more fluent in spoken and written English.
- Those students initially requiring more EAL support, will also attend separate EAL lessons as part of their daily timetable (see below).

6.2 The Classroom Teacher's Role

Teachers will:

- Develop strategies to support English language development and show differentiated work in their planning. These will be recorded in weekly plans for the EAL department

and others to review and discuss.

- Have high expectations, expecting students to contribute and give more than single word answers. EAL students should be set appropriate and challenging learning objectives, with their progress being monitored carefully.
- Recognise that EAL students need more time to process answers.
- Allow children to use their mother tongue to explore concepts.
- Teach specific vocabulary for mathematics, science, history and geography, as well as for other subjects where appropriate.
- Use groups to ensure that EAL students hear good models of English.
- Use collaborative group activities.
- Provide a range of reading books that highlight the different ways in which English is used.
- Provide phonic software and audio books as appropriate.
- Ensure there are many opportunities for talking to both adults and peers.
- Review tasks and students' progress with the EAL teacher and monitor these arrangements at regular intervals, ensuring that appropriate objectives are set based on recent assessments.

6.3 The role of the EAL teacher

EAL teachers:

- Are responsible for supporting identified EAL students within their year group through planning activities in collaboration with the class teacher.
- Should consider EAL plans and students' targets when planning lessons so that they can focus on areas of need and provide specific support. They will feedback to the class teacher regarding progress at regular intervals.
- Will work with individuals or groups of EAL students within the class, or outside, depending on need.
- Will maintain accurate records of assessments by the EAL department of students' progress and attainment.
- Will monitor assessment information to track students' progress in their mainstream subjects.

6.4 The role of the Head of EAL

The Head of EAL will:

- Manage and monitor the department's provision of EAL within the school
- Liaise with the Deputy Head Academic and Heads of Department on issues of planning, assessment and teaching strategies, and to write an departmental action plan annually.
- Teach an appropriate number of EAL classes
- Support staff in the teaching of EAL students and direct teachers to useful resources when appropriate.
- Organise the assessment of potential EAL students as part of the admissions testing process

and any students subsequently referred to the EAL Department by teachers.

- Be responsible for organizing regular assessments of students' English language progress.
- Be responsible for ensuring that comprehensive data is collected, maintained and updated at the point of admissions and throughout a student's career at the school, including all assessment data and maintaining the school's EAL register.
- Respond to requests for information about EAL students and provision.
- Ensure that the department reports regularly to parents on their child's language progress.

6.5 Developing Links with Home

The importance of home/school links cannot be overestimated. Parents will receive substantial support to help them fully understand:

- what might be a very different educational provision to the one they know;
- what we are doing for their children, and;
- how they can work with the school to support their child(ren)'s progress and confidence.

Families must be encouraged to feel confident in approaching the school.

Parents of children receiving Tier 3 support will receive a short weekly review communicating what their child has been studying that week. They will be encouraged to communicate regularly with the EAL department, which also has termly meetings at the parent/teacher evenings. The EAL department will also provide parent workshops during the year.

7. EAL SUPPORT STRUCTURE

7.1 SPGSI School Chengdu has a three-tiered EAL support structure as outlined below:

- Tier One – Quality provision for all
- Tier Two – In-class support
- Tier Three – Small group / 1:1 intervention

7.2 Tier One:

EAL students not requiring additional support inside or outside of the classroom are given '*differentiated/adapted work*' by the subject specialist / class teacher guided by the EAL Department. This includes vocabulary lists for new topics, visual displays to introduce key words and phrases etc. Teachers also consider students' language background and culture and ensure this is included in the learning environment. Teachers will be guided and supported by EAL staff.

7.3 Tier Two:

EAL students who have been identified during the admissions process or who have been referred by (specialist) teachers to the EAL team as needing support receive '*Push-in*' support in class, once they have been evaluated as being 'in need'. This is usually delivered as part of a small group and includes

support with grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, reading and spelling. The progress of Tier Two students is monitored by the class teacher, with input from the EAL department.

7.4 Tier Three:

EAL students requiring more personalised interventions receive weekly 'Pull-out' support during lesson time to work on grammar, vocabulary, writing, speaking, listening and/or phonics; this is done in either small groups or 1-1 sessions. Parents are notified of this provision and are required to agree to it before support is given. The number of lessons offered per week varies depending on timetabling and need. Tier three students have their progress tracked against an Assessment Framework Profile, also used by the EAL teachers to inform lesson planning.

7.5 Students may be grouped according to their year group or skill levels to ensure they are able to access support as often as possible without missing core classes on a regular basis. As students progress, it is expected that they will move up through the Tiers, following discussion between the EAL department and the class teachers. In most cases, it is expected that EAL students will receive EAL support for no longer than a year, although there may be exceptions according to the student's age and level of English when they entered the school.

7.6 Support will continue during the summer holiday providing an annual, EAL summer camp for Y5-9 students to further develop and accelerate students' language acquisition, especially those who receive Tier 3 support. Led and delivered by SPGSI staff, sessions are day-long, differentiated according to language ability, adopt a thematic/book-based approach and focus on supporting development in areas such as vocabulary, grammar, spelling, academic skills and listening and speaking.

7.7 Whilst there may be cases in which parents are encouraged to engage a tutor at home to support and accelerate their child's process of language acquisition, the cost of providing them with Tier 2 and Tier 3 specialist support in school will be considered as part of their academic fees and with no extra cost incurred.

7.8 Well-being will be raised as a priority for students with particularly low-level English skills, and especially for those students who have moved suddenly or frequently and need assistance with forming friendships and getting orientated to their new surroundings. To this end, the school will attempt to connect students with a language buddy – perhaps a student who is further along on their journey – who can offer mentorship and support. Mentors will also work closely with the EAL Department to ensure there is wrap-around support for such students.

7.9 Although English is the second language for most of our students, this does not mean that they have a learning difficulty. For external subject assessments, although having EAL is not

a valid reason for an access arrangement or allowance (Cambridge Handbook, 2024, p.34), students will be allowed to use simple translation/bilingual dictionaries, except in language exams or where the syllabus says they cannot use. ‘Simple translation dictionary’ means a dictionary that only translates the word and not the meaning or definition of the word. In rare and exceptional circumstances, the school’s Exams Officer may seek approval for EAL students to be given extra time when using a bilingual translation dictionary, but this is dependent on individual exam boards. To enable our EAL students to demonstrate their understanding in internal, school-written subject assessments, teachers may use the above, as well starter sentences, simplified language for questions, fewer questions and modified questions etc.

8. EAL IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

8.1 Admission Arrangements

All successful EAL students are identified during the admissions process and placed on an EAL register.

If a student is identified during the admissions process as potentially requiring additional EAL support, the EAL department will conduct an age-appropriate (WIDA) assessment as part of the admissions process to determine a candidate’s linguistic strengths and weaknesses.

In following the normal admissions procedures, the school also aims to collect and record the following additional information:

- Country of origin
- Date of arrival in China
- Student’s first language
- Other languages spoken at home by the student
- Student’s level of literacy in other languages
- Links with students already at the school
- Student’s educational background

When assessing applications, staff may also consult with the EAL department if they are unsure as to whether a child requires EAL support. The child may then be required to complete an assessment by an EAL teacher before a place is offered.

Students with EAL needs are admitted to SPGSI School Chengdu according to the same criteria as other students, and undergo general academic assessment e.g., interviews with members of the SMT, CAT4 testing and individual assessments in science for students entering Year 10 and above in the Senior School.

If a child with a lower-than-expected level of English is given a place following an assessment of their level of English – see above - he/she will be provided with English learning resources to complete prior to their admission to raise their level and will be expected to attend EAL

interventions given by the EAL Team.

In most cases, students who require Tier 2 and 3 assistance are limited to a maximum of 20% of students in any class year/group, unless a year group has been temporarily streamed to account for initial differing language abilities.

8.2 The EAL Register

Successful candidates who are identified as EAL students will be placed on an EAL Register on entry to the school. The Head of EAL will be responsible for compiling, monitoring and revising this register on a regular basis, according to the following guidelines:

- All new existing EAL students will be placed on the register, which will record at which Tier level they are receiving support;
- Further students may only enter the register once they have been assessed by the Head of EAL, following a teacher referral;
- Progress will be reviewed termly by the EAL teacher and class teacher(s). Students who it is judged no longer require additional EAL support will be moved to a 'watch-list' and monitored for one term. If progress is maintained, they will be removed from the additional support EAL Register.
- An updated copy of the Register will be provided to the SLT and the Admissions department at the end of each term.

8.3 EAL Monitoring, Assessment, Record Keeping and Reporting

The class teacher, EAL teacher and the Head of EAL will work together on a half-termly basis to assess each student's needs and to set objectives.

The appropriate class teacher will identify the level of attainment in reading and writing using the usual assessment methods, including CATs performance.

In addition, the EAL department will conduct various summative tests throughout the term to assess the rate of students' progress. The results of these assessments will be recorded centrally and made available to staff and to parents. These tests will also be used to assess the appropriate level of support that each student continues to require.

Before it is decided that a student should progress to Tier 1, the class teacher, EAL teacher and Head of EAL together will agree that sufficient progress has been made against the set objectives.

The aim is to enable every student to move off the register in one academic year. Students that do not achieve this level of progress within two years will be reviewed in detail to identify the contributing factors and an action plan to meet their needs.

Parents are provided with weekly reviews of the child's progress and fuller reports as part of the end-of-term reporting cycle.

8.4 Monitoring of the Policy

- All staff are responsible for implementing this policy and should be aware of it and its contents.
- The Head of EAL will collect and analyse all EAL data to assess the success of the department's strategy. He/she will identify strengths and any areas for improvement in regular discussion with the Deputy Head Academic.
- This policy will be reviewed each year to ensure it best reflects the school's approach to offering EAL support.

9. Teacher Referral

9.1 If a specialist / classroom teacher identifies a student of concern, who has not already been identified during the admissions process, he/she will be referred to the EAL department for assessment, using the EAL Initial Concern Form (Appendix 1).

9.2 Initial Referral Assessment

9.2.1 SPGSI School Chengdu uses The Bell Foundation's EAL assessment framework to ensure EAL students reach their full potential in their English Language development. Primarily formative in purpose, it indicates what a student can do, informs curriculum provision, and helps diagnosis of needs and individualisation of learning, to promote potential development. Its assessment descriptors (one set for primary and another for secondary) cover the four strands of language knowledge: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Viewing, and Writing.

9.2.2. English language proficiency in each strand is represented by five A-E bands:

- A - New to English / Beginning
- B – Early acquisition / Emerging
- C – Developing competence / Expanding
- D – Competent / Diversifying
- E – Fluent

PRIMARY EXAMPLE

9.2.3. Each band has 10 assessment descriptors that are sequenced to reflect internal progression e.g., descriptors 1- 3 are 'early development' and descriptors 8 -10 are 'getting closer to the next band'. Although the descriptors are not expected to be achieved in strict order by all students, this way of ordering the descriptors within each band enables targets to be set and progress to be tracked.

PRIMARY EXAMPLE

PRIMARY READING & VIEWING					
	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E
CODE	Showing little or no knowledge of written English; taking first steps to engage with written and digital texts in English	Making sense of written text at word and phrase/sentence level, using visual information to help decipher meaning	Drawing on growing knowledge of vocabulary and grammar to engage with curriculum-related texts and tasks	Working with written language and accompanying visual and aural material productively, using different strategies in response to curriculum tasks	Engaging with curriculum-related reading activities independently and productively in different subject areas
EARLY DEVELOPMENT NOT EXPECTED TO REACH THIS BAND GETTING CLOSER TO THE NEXT BAND	1 Can make use of their cultural and own first language experiences to try to make sense of words in digital and print forms (i.e. doesn't understand but may distinguish between words and numbers or symbols or text types – a story from a book or an advertisement from a website)	Can recognise words and the sequences of words that form familiar phrases or expressions (e.g. 'Once upon a time')	Can recognise and read irregular (but frequently occurring) spelling patterns (e.g. 'tre' in 'treasure')	Can relate written material to classroom activities and understand that written material is often organised and presented differently from spoken language (e.g. written instructions for science experiments versus teacher and peer talk while conducting the experiment)	Can process information in written texts that are structured differently from that gained through spoken language, even if they are on the same topic or have similar content (e.g. 'Move this over there' versus 'We should put the table by the door')
	2 Can follow written text conventions (e.g. left to right movement in English, continuity of text from top to bottom of page)	Can use awareness of grapheme-phoneme correspondence to try to decipher unfamiliar words/phrases (e.g. can try to sound out a written word)	Can recognise common prefixes (e.g. 're-' in 'return') and suffixes (e.g. '-ed' in 'walked') and use this awareness and knowledge to make sense of text	Can identify the purpose and intended audience of curriculum-related texts without prompting (e.g. advertising material versus scientific description)	Can understand and interpret visuals and graphics in conjunction with written text appropriately in curriculum tasks
	3 Can understand that written text and visuals have content, meaning and organisation (e.g. front and back covers of a book)	Can attempt to use familiar and some unfamiliar words in phrases/sentences, and try to make sense of them	Can make sense of taught curriculum texts but may need support to comprehend unfamiliar content, culturally specific nuances (e.g. 'the angel twinkled on the top of the tree'), and figurative and metaphoric expressions (e.g. 'Don't wind him up', 'life is a roller coaster')	Can recognise meaning of words/phrases expressing degrees of obligation, probability and possibility in context (e.g. 'may do', 'must do', 'should do')	Can understand the meaning in a passage (such as identifying the character(s) in a story, even when not obvious) and the sequence of happenings expressed in sentences based on knowledge of complex grammar (e.g. the passive voice 'No pocket money until you tidy your room. You have been warned,' said Mum)
	4 Can distinguish and understand different forms of meaning representation (e.g. letters, words, visual images, symbols and graphics)	Can use own growing language knowledge to process text at the phrase/sentence level, showing awareness of idiomatic expressions (e.g. 'in the beginning', 'A long time ago')	Can attempt to identify and interpret information from visual images, tables, charts and graphs, and relate it to the task at hand	Can use growing knowledge of grammar to try to make sense of complex expressions (e.g. conditional constructions such as 'If I had a choice, I would...')	Can recognise complex cohesive markers to link ideas across sentences and passages (e.g. 'although', 'in spite of', pronouns referring back across several sentences e.g. 'The above age was... it...')
	5 Can recognise names, including own name, and labels of objects and spaces in the classroom and other familiar parts of the school (e.g. school office)	Can comprehend taught/rehearsed short written passages at whole text level, using visuals as support where appropriate	Can identify main idea(s) in curriculum material and use own prior experience and learning to assist understanding where appropriate	Can follow written material to do tasks (such as classifying and sequencing events in narratives, descriptions and processes) in subject content texts independently	Can find specific information or detail from written texts to respond to 'how', 'who' or 'why' questions
	6 Can match pictures and other visuals with taught/rehearsed words	Can attempt to read/check own writing for meaning with teacher/peer support	Can understand most subject content texts, including factual accounts, narratives, opinion pieces, although may need support with unfamiliar vocabulary, complex sentences and writing styles	Can identify figurative speech (e.g. 'a star was born') and metaphoric expressions (e.g. 'they bottled up their anger') in curriculum texts, and seek help if necessary	Can identify explicit and implicit messages in informational and fictional texts (e.g. ironic and/or indirect judgmental statements)
	7 Can make sense of familiar words in books, on signs and posters in school and in frequently visited digital environments	Can identify and extract information (words and passages) in texts in response to concrete 'what', 'where' and 'who' questions	Can comprehend curriculum-linked English literature mostly at the literal level, but may rely on teacher and peer support to understand cultural references and meanings	Can recognise different text types/genres, understanding that the purpose of communication can shape text organisation (e.g. a narrative of personal experience versus a report of a science experiment)	Can evaluate an informational or fictional text in terms of its interest, relevance and usefulness
	8 Can recognise and use grapheme-phoneme correspondence to decipher the meaning of some words in a taught/rehearsed text	Can read out loud short texts with familiar/predictable structures written in everyday language, attempting to use pauses and intonation to mark meaning	Can retrieve relevant details from curriculum and literary texts to identify and retell the gist of content	Can use a developing range of reading strategies, especially when prompted (e.g. adjusting their reading rate for the task at hand), using dictionaries or other references	Can draw own conclusion/form own opinion from reading where appropriate (e.g. when participating in class and group discussions)
	9 Can follow and make use of familiar words to extract basic meaning from a familiar text	Can begin to work out main points, story lines and explicit messages from illustrated text without prompting	Can begin to differentiate between informational and fictional statements/texts independently	Can reread a text to check understanding if told that the information in the text has not been completely understood	Can analyse curriculum-related texts in terms of nature/type of content, organisation and purpose
	10 Can choose books or other reading materials to join in learning activities, especially when guided	Can use growing awareness of familiar grapheme-phoneme correspondence, spelling patterns, and contextual clues to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words, phrases and short texts	Can use compositional and design features of print and digital material to navigate and locate information (e.g. contents pages, links, tabs, search functions)	Can identify main ideas and specific information in curriculum-related texts for retelling, paraphrasing and answering questions	Can independently apply reading skills and strategies already acquired to engage with new texts at word, sentence, and whole-text levels, using visuals and prior knowledge to enhance understanding

APPENDIX 1

SPGSI SCHOOL, CHENGDU		
EAL INITIAL CONCERN FORM		
Student Name:		Year/Grade:
Subject:	Teacher:	Date:
Brief overview of nature of difficulties:		
Brief overview of impact of difficulties:		
Specialist teacher comments:		
EAL/SEN Support comments:		
Signature: _____ _____		Name: