



English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy (Senior School)

Applies to	Senior School
Responsibility	Deputy Head (Academic)
Approving Body	Academic Committee
Date reviewed	Michaelmas 2025
Next review	Michaelmas 2026

Wells Cathedral School values and celebrates its multicultural and multilingual community. Alongside strong pastoral and academic support, opportunities to develop English Language skills are crucial to the success of our overseas pupils. Such opportunities are provided by teachers in mainstream classrooms (as part of good teaching practice), and by specialist teachers of English as an Additional Language (EAL). The role of the EAL department is to work with mainstream teachers in the development, planning and delivery of a language-aware curriculum, as well as to monitor and support all pupils for whom English is an additional language.

1. Pre-arrival, orientation and induction:

- Where possible, members of the EAL department meet new pupils (and/or their parents) prior to their arrival at Wells. These meetings usually take place via video conferencing during Trinity Term and are an opportunity to discuss language needs or any other concerns in advance of their start at school.
- All new international starters are sent a welcome email once their place at the school has been confirmed with a link to the 'EAL at Wells' document, detailing the provision available for pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- New international pupils in year 10 and above, with their parents, are invited to the 'EAL at Wells' presentation on New Pupil Day. This is an opportunity for them to meet the department and ask questions over coffee, before listening to the team present the different options of support available to them in detail. Pupils in attendance are then assessed to determine their level of English with regards to their written English and grammar knowledge.

2. Monitoring:

- Prior to admission at Wells Cathedral School, prospective pupils complete an adaptive online test, the Cambridge English Placement Test (CEPT), to give a general assessment of their English level. Results are banded according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Language, allowing the school to make a judgment about the candidates suitability for the proposed programme of study. For example, pupils are normally expected to have reached level B2 (which corresponds to IGCSE English as a Second Language Grade 4 or IELTS 5.5) before being accepted into the Sixth Form.
- Those who fall below the usual expected level for their age group are highlighted to the Head of EAL by admissions and informal interviews with parents and/or pupils are set up to gather further information about language level, interests and the accessibility of the course(s) chosen.
- The EAL department also liaises regularly with subject teachers and tutors to ensure that any difficulties arising from limitations in the English Language are addressed quickly and effectively. Concerns or comments on progress can be emailed directly to the Head of EAL as they arise by any member of staff.
- Feedback from mainstream teaching staff is also requested at key points in the school year; after an initial 3 - 4 week settling in period, and mid-year/after internal examinations, for example.
- This monitoring process is ongoing for all students for whom English is not a first language, regardless of whether they currently receive EAL instruction.

3. Language development and access to the mainstream curriculum

- Throughout the year, there is a close liaison between key subject teachers and EAL teaching staff to support the production of appropriate subject resources and EAL friendly strategies

for both individuals and groups of pupils.

- Once a week, the EAL department runs open Academic Clinics where pupils can ask for help with individual school assignments, or with any other aspect of school life.
- The EAL department also helps with the process of applying for university in the UK or elsewhere in liaison with the Head of Sixth Form and tutors.
- For pupils who need support beyond what can be provided in the mainstream classroom, the EAL department timetables individual or small group lessons where the focus is ongoing linguistic support for a range of subjects within the curriculum as well as content tailored to develop each individual's English Language skills.
- The number of hours per week of English tuition will vary, and depends very much on the individual pupil's requirements. If at any time a pupil needs extra help, provision will be made within the curriculum, where timetabling allows.
- In some rare cases, pupils may arrive at Wells with very limited language. In these instances, we offer **enhanced support** as a foundation for mainstream study. This allows for an intensive programme of English classes, organised around core subjects where the pupil is part of mainstream classes, the aim being to facilitate rapid language acquisition, whilst allowing the pupil to enjoy the benefits of being part of school life for the majority of their day.

4. Home languages and the value of multilingualism

The School values multilingualism and takes reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in recreation and learning.

- The pupil-led International Committee regularly organises cultural events throughout the year to enable all pupils to gain a wider understanding of other languages and cultures. In recent times this has included pupils teaching introductory classes for other pupils in their native language as part of Languages Week, participation in assembly in the cathedral, Canto-pop night and celebrations of various national festivals.
- Where appropriate, older pupils are encouraged to develop their home language by working towards the GCSE or A level in their home language, with some support from the languages faculty.

5. English Qualifications

Pupils are taught in preparation for the following examinations (as appropriate to their individual needs and personal goals). The IELTS and CAE exams are recognised by British Universities as a clear indication of whether the student's command of English is of an appropriate level to be accepted onto any course applied for.

Y12/13	CAE	Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English
	IELTS	International English Language Testing System
Y11	IGCSE	English as a Second Language
Y7-11	PET	Cambridge Preliminary English Test
	FCE	Cambridge First Certificate in English

6. Fees

A charge is made for the English Support Programme and for preparation for English Language Qualifications, but all pupils have access to a range of options for support which are not charged.