ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE PROVISION POLICY

2026-27

ST ANDREW'S COLLEGE POLICY DOCUMENT	
TO BE REVIEWED: August 2027	**RESPONSIBILITY: Deputy Head (Academic)**
AUTHORISED BY: Annette Poulain **DATE: 16/07/26**	**SIGNATURE:**

1. Purpose and scope

St Andrew's College, Cambridge welcomes students from a wide range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This policy sets out how the College will identify and meet the needs of students learning through English as an additional language, so that they can access their courses, achieve their potential and participate fully in College life.

Over 80% of students at St Andrew's College are EAL learners. English-language development is therefore central to our teaching, curriculum and pastoral provision. We teach in small classes, averaging eight students, which allow teachers to identify language barriers promptly, provide individual feedback and give students frequent opportunities to speak, ask questions and practise academic English.

It applies to all College programmes, including GCSE, A-Level, NCFE Level 3 Foundation and English-language provision, and to students joining at any point in the year. All teachers share responsibility for developing the language students need to learn successfully. Specialist English teaching supplements this responsibility.

2. Definitions and principles

English as an additional language (EAL) describes students who use or have been exposed to a language other than English in their home or community and are learning through English. Students' proficiency, prior education and support needs vary widely; EAL status does not by itself indicate low attainment or a need for specialist intervention.

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) develops the language and study skills needed for academic learning. IELTS preparation develops the skills needed for that examination. These

overlap, but an IELTS score alone does not describe all of a student's classroom language needs.

The College values multilingualism and students' identities, maintains ambitious expectations, and distinguishes English-language development from subject knowledge and ability. Conversational confidence does not necessarily mean that a student can interpret complex texts, evaluate evidence or write accurately in an academic register.

3. Guidance and statutory context

This policy draws on guidance for England, where the College operates. The Independent School Standards require curriculum planning to take account of pupils' ages, aptitudes and needs, effective teaching and assessment, and information about provision for pupils with EAL. The DfE's April 2026 guidance explains the standards. This policy supports their implementation alongside the College's equality and disability duties.

The SEND Code of Practice distinguishes additional-language acquisition from special educational needs. Its principles inform this policy, with direct statutory application determined by provider status. The DfE's 2011 EAL tuition publication is used as historical practice guidance, not as a new statutory framework. The assessment timetable, readiness categories and IELTS threshold below are College arrangements, not government requirements.

4. Admission and induction

Before entry, admissions and academic staff will gather available information about languages spoken, literacy in those languages, previous schooling, time learning through English, qualifications, English-language assessment and any known SEND or support needs. Academic suitability and language support will be considered together; nationality or accent will not be used as a proxy for proficiency.

Induction will explain the timetable, attendance, learning routines, assessment, safeguarding and how to ask for help, using accessible language and checking understanding. Tutors will help new students establish peer relationships and access enrichment. Relevant pastoral and boarding staff will receive the information needed to support a smooth transition.

4.1 Initial assessment and records

An EAL or EAP teacher will coordinate a diagnostic assessment within the first two teaching weeks after entry wherever practicable. This will cover listening, speaking, reading and writing, together with academic vocabulary and study skills relevant to the course. Existing

IELTS or other results will inform the assessment but will not replace direct evidence of current classroom needs.

Subject staff will contribute examples of reading, discussion, problem solving and written work. Where language may conceal ability, staff will use practical, visual or other suitable ways to explore understanding. Literacy, interrupted education and familiarity with UK assessment will be considered separately from English proficiency.

The EAL or EAP team will maintain a working record of the student's starting point, skill profile, agreed targets, provision, named lead and review date. Relevant strategies will be included in the Student Passport and shared with staff who need them, under College data-protection arrangements. Support begins while assessment is being completed.

5. Provision and allocation of support

The College will combine accessible subject teaching with timetabled EAL, EAP or IELTS provision according to assessed need. Students below IELTS 7.0, or judged to be working below an equivalent level on suitable diagnostic evidence, will attend the College's compulsory English support programme. Attendance will be recorded and followed up through normal College procedures.

The IELTS 7.0 threshold is an internal support trigger. It is not a universal entry requirement or a guarantee of university readiness. Students at or above that level may still need support, particularly with individual skills or subject language. Support will be integrated into the timetable and coordinated to protect access to core subjects.

An individual plan will identify two or three specific language targets, the teaching or practice required, the staff responsible and a review date. Provision may include group teaching, focused individual support, subject-linked vocabulary and writing work, guided reading and structured independent practice. Grouping and intensity will respond to current needs and progress.

Decisions to reduce, end or increase specialist support will be made by the Deputy Head (Academic) with EAL or EAP and subject staff, taking account of sustained classroom performance, the student's views and progression requirements. A single test result will not automatically end support.

5.1 Dedicated IELTS team and examination preparation

The College has a dedicated IELTS team providing specialist teaching and preparation for IELTS and support for other equivalent English-language examinations appropriate to

students' progression plans. The team works with subject teachers, tutors and the UCAS and Careers Advisor to connect examination preparation with the academic English required across the curriculum.

Preparation includes an initial skills assessment, agreed overall and component-score targets, structured teaching in listening, speaking, reading and writing, examination techniques, timed practice, mock assessments and individual feedback. Students receive targeted practice in weaker skills and guidance on independent study. Progress is reviewed through the College's planned checkpoints and ongoing classroom assessment.

Where a student requires an alternative English-language examination, the team will advise on a suitable route and provide preparation support matched to its format and assessment criteria. Staff will confirm acceptance with the intended university or receiving institution, including any minimum component scores, validity period and test-version requirements, before recommending an examination. Tests described as equivalent are not automatically interchangeable for every purpose.

If a secure English language test is needed for immigration purposes, the College's authorised compliance staff will check the relevant route and current GOV.UK requirements, including the approved test, provider and test centre. University acceptance and immigration acceptance will be checked separately. Students will receive guidance on appropriate test timing and booking requirements; entry is subject to the chosen provider's arrangements.

6. Classroom practice across the curriculum

Teachers will plan the language demands of their subjects alongside subject content and maintain appropriate intellectual challenge. They will make instructions and success criteria explicit and check understanding through explanation, demonstration and application rather than relying on a student saying that they understand.

- Teach essential subject vocabulary, command words and the language of explanation, comparison, evaluation and justification in context.
- Model reading and writing processes, use annotated examples, and provide sentence structures or writing frames where helpful, gradually removing support as independence develops.
- Use visuals, diagrams, practical demonstrations, chunked instructions and structured resources without unnecessarily simplifying the underlying concepts.
- Allow thinking and processing time; use purposeful paired discussion, rehearsal and questioning to build confident participation.

- Give focused feedback that distinguishes subject misconceptions from language errors, and provide time to use that feedback.
- Encourage wider reading, careful use of bilingual glossaries and purposeful use of home languages to develop understanding. English remains the principal language of teaching and assessed work unless a course explicitly provides otherwise.

Students may use approved translation or digital tools for learning where appropriate, but teachers will check understanding and independence. Confidential information must not be entered into unapproved services. AI use must follow the College's relevant policies and the rules for each assessment.

7. Assessment and progress reviews

Subject assessments will be used alongside language assessment to judge progress from each student's starting point. Teachers will record the nature of any support used so that results are interpreted fairly. Adapted classroom tasks can help identify understanding; formal assessed work must follow the applicable qualification requirements.

The College will use four planned English-language checkpoints for September entrants: September diagnostic assessment; December progress review; March full mock and readiness review; and May final review and transition planning. Students joining later will receive an entry diagnostic and an appropriate review schedule. Classroom evidence and concerns will be considered between checkpoints.

At each checkpoint, staff will review all four language skills, progress towards targets, access to subject learning and any relevant overall and component score requirements. Students will receive a short action plan and a readiness judgement linked to an identified course, assessment or progression goal.

- Ready means that current evidence meets the identified language requirements and shows that the student can manage the associated academic tasks with normal classroom provision.
- Close to ready means that specific, limited gaps remain; the plan will identify the targeted support and reassessment needed.
- Not yet ready means that substantial barriers remain; staff will review the intensity of support, timescale and, where necessary, realistic progression options with the student.

These are internal planning categories. They do not replace an examination result, university decision or visa requirement. If progress is slower than expected, staff will review teaching,

attendance, opportunities to practise, literacy, prior schooling and wellbeing, and agree revised actions and a follow-up date.

7.1 Examinations and university progression

The Exams Officer and SENCo will check any proposed access arrangement against current awarding-body and JCQ requirements, including qualification-specific restrictions and deadlines. EAL status does not automatically confer extra time, a bilingual dictionary or any other arrangement. Classroom translation support must not be assumed to be permitted in an examination.

The UCAS and Careers Advisor and EAL or EAP staff will help students identify the current English requirements for their intended courses, including component scores, accepted tests and relevant deadlines. Staff will distinguish academic admission conditions from immigration requirements and refer individual visa questions to the College's authorised compliance staff.

8. EAL and special educational needs

Difficulties arising solely from limited English are not SEND. Equally, EAL must not prevent the recognition of coexisting learning difficulties or disabilities. Staff will not assume that low English scores reflect low ability or that all persistent difficulties are explained by additional-language learning.

Where concerns persist, subject and EAL or EAP staff will consult the SENCo and consider development and learning across languages, prior schooling, family information, response to teaching and evidence from different contexts. Assessment tools will be interpreted with attention to linguistic and cultural demands. Specialist advice will be sought where appropriate; language support will continue alongside any SEND assessment or provision.

High potential will be recognised through the College's Gifted and Talented Policy. Language needs must not restrict access to stretch, enrichment or ambitious progression advice.

9. Wellbeing and family communication

Tutors will check belonging, confidence, workload and access to College activities, recognising that adjustment to a new country and education system may affect participation. Staff will challenge racist or language-related bullying and make clear how students can report concerns. Safeguarding information must be understandable to students; any concern will be referred through College procedures.

Families will receive clear information about language needs, provision and progress through reports and meetings. Staff will check understanding and arrange suitable translation or interpreting where needed, particularly for significant or sensitive discussions. Students or peers will not be relied on to interpret safeguarding or other confidential matters. Communication with families will respect the privacy and consent arrangements applicable to adult students.

10. Roles and responsibilities

The Principal and governing body will oversee implementation and suitable resourcing. The Deputy Head (Academic) will lead the policy, coordinate provision and timetabling, review outcomes and ensure relevant staff development.

The designated EAL or EAP lead, dedicated IELTS team and English-language teachers will coordinate diagnostics, individual targets, specialist teaching, records and checkpoint reviews, and advise colleagues on strategies. Subject teachers remain responsible for access, challenge and progress in their lessons and will share concerns and evidence promptly.

Tutors will coordinate the student's overall experience and family communication. The SENCo will advise on additional needs and assessment; the Exams Officer will oversee examination arrangements; the UCAS and Careers Advisor will coordinate progression guidance. Pastoral and boarding staff will support communication, inclusion and welfare. Students will attend agreed provision, complete practice and seek help when needed.

11. Evaluation and policy review

The Deputy Head (Academic) will review provision termly, considering completion of initial assessment and planned reviews, attendance at support, progress across the four language skills, subject outcomes and student feedback. Leaders will examine whether provision reaches those who need it and whether learners make progress towards individual academic and progression goals.

An annual review will identify strengths and changes needed in teaching, staffing, resources or timetabling. Staff development and learning walks will consider vocabulary teaching, questioning, modelling, participation and use of Student Passports. Evaluation will take account of different starting points, length of enrolment and small cohorts.