



مدرسة كامبريدج انترناشيونال
Cambridge International School, Dubai

Approved By: Stephen Brecken

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1. Vision and Intent

At GEMS Cambridge International School, Dubai, we believe that language is the foundation of learning and reading is the key to unlocking academic success. The GEMS of the World Policy integrate the Read Like a GEM (RLAG) Framework with our English as an Additional Language (EAL) provision to ensure every student—regardless of their linguistic background—develops the skills, confidence, and love for reading required to thrive academically and socially.

This policy sets out a comprehensive approach to supporting multilingual learners through high-quality teaching, targeted intervention, and inclusive classroom practice. It ensures that language barriers never limit access to the curriculum or participation in the life of the school.

EAL – An English as an Additional Language (EAL) student at CIS refers to an individual whose primary or dominant language is not English and who requires support to develop proficiency in English for academic purposes. EAL students typically have varying levels of English language proficiency and may face challenges in accessing the curriculum and with participating fully in educational activities conducted in English.

A student would be classified as an EAL student if they have one or more of the following characteristics:

- They are in the process of acquiring proficiency in the English language, whilst also developing their content knowledge and academic skills.
- They are non-native English speakers who may have varying levels of proficiency in English, ranging from beginner to intermediate.
- They are a student who struggles in accessing the curriculum due to language barriers
- They are students with limited vocabulary, grammar, and language skills, which impacts their communication, comprehension, reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities in an academic setting.
- Students who are working at 2 sublevels or lower than their expected year group in Literacy/English due to language barriers
- Students who have been in an English-speaking school for less than 2 years.

Proficiency in English - Key

A – New to English

- May use first language for learning and other purposes.
- May remain completely silent in the classroom.
- May be copying/repeating some words or phrases.
- May understand some everyday expressions in English but may have minimal/no literacy in English.
- Needs a considerable amount of EAL support.

B - Early Acquisition

- May follow day-to-day social communication in English and participate in learning activities with support.
- Beginning to use spoken English for social purposes.
- May understand simple instructions and can follow narrative/accounts with visual support.
- May have developed some skills in reading and writing.
- May have become familiar with some subject-specific vocabulary.
- Still needs a significant amount of EAL support to access the curriculum.

C - Developing Competence

- May participate in learning activities with increasing independence.
- Able to express self orally in English but structural inaccuracies are still apparent.
- Literacy will require ongoing support, particularly for understanding text and writing.
- May be able to follow abstract concepts and more complex written English.
- Requires ongoing EAL support to access the curriculum fully.

D- Competent

- Oral English will be developing well, enabling successful engagement in activities across the curriculum.
- Can read and understand a wide variety of texts.
- Written English may lack complexity and contain occasional evidence of errors in structure.
- Needs some support to access subtle nuances of meaning, to refine English usage and to develop abstract vocabulary.
- Needs some/occasional EAL support to access complex curriculum material and tasks.

E- Fluent

- Can work across the curriculum to a level of competence.
- Works without EAL support across the curriculum.

2. Implementation Framework

Implementation of this policy is structured around the Read Like a GEM framework, which promotes literacy through two core components: a Universal Offer for all students and a Targeted Offer for those requiring additional support.

Universal Offer – Building a Reading Culture for All

The Universal Offer ensures that reading is celebrated and embedded across all phases of the school. Every student has access to engaging, age-appropriate resources and opportunities to develop fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary. Key strategies include:

- GEMS Readers Catalogue – A curated selection of texts across genres and levels to inspire a lifelong love of reading.
- GEMS Reading Challenge – A school-wide initiative encouraging students to read at least 10 books per year, supported by Reading Records and certificates.
- Read Aloud Sessions – Daily or weekly teacher-led sessions modelling fluent reading and expressive storytelling.
- Vocabulary Development (ReadingWise) – Structured teaching of Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary to enhance subject access and comprehension.
- Subject Readers – Integration of reading across the curriculum to strengthen content understanding in areas such as Science, History, and Geography.
- Library and Book Corners – Classrooms and libraries serve as literacy-rich environments promoting independent reading and inquiry.



Targeted Offer – Closing Gaps in Reading

For students who require additional support, targeted interventions are implemented to close gaps in decoding, comprehension, and fluency. These are delivered through evidence-based programs including Reading Wise and Flash Academy, ensuring measurable progress through regular assessment. Key interventions include:

- Flash Academy Pathways – Personalised EAL instruction aligned to CEFR bands (A–E), supporting listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.
- 100 Days of Success Onboarding – A structured welcome and integration program ensuring new-to-English students build confidence and belonging.

Integration in Classroom Practice

Teachers use GEMS of the World language techniques to scaffold understanding and reduce cognitive load for multilingual learners. These include:

- Simplifying instructions using consistent classroom language, gestures, and visuals.
- Providing structured wait time and speaking frames to promote participation.
- Supporting students to move from one-word answers to full, academic sentences.
- Displaying and revisiting key vocabulary through interactive word walls and glossaries.
- Using drawings, diagrams, and graphic organisers for visual expression.
- Collaborative planning between teachers and faculty to ensure language scaffolds are embedded in lessons.

3. Assessment and Progress Tracking

A data-driven approach underpins the implementation of this policy, ensuring that all students make measurable progress in reading and language acquisition. Assessment tools include:

- National Group Reading Test (NGRT) – Establishes baseline reading proficiency from Year 2 upwards and identifies students requiring targeted support.



- FlashAcademy Assessments – Measure EAL proficiency across listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- ReadingWise Reports – Track vocabulary acquisition and reading age improvements across 10-week cycles.
- Teacher Observations and Checklists – Qualitative tracking of student participation, reading fluency, and comprehension.
- Pupil Profiles – Centralised digital records showing baseline data, intervention plans, and review outcomes.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Effective implementation of this policy relies on collaboration among all stakeholders. Roles include:

- Principal (Stephen Brecken) – Provides strategic oversight of literacy, inclusion, and EAL provision across the school.
- Philip Yates leads the strategic implementation of *Read Like a GEM* and *GEMS of the World* across the school. Oversees data tracking, assessments, intervention planning, and monitors progress and impact.
- EAL Lead (Kanchan Panjwani) – Oversees FlashAcademy delivery, manages group interventions, and supports teacher training.
- Class Teachers – Deliver classroom reading strategies, implement scaffolds, and monitor student progress.
- Librarian (Rachna Mahajan) – Manages the GEMS Readers Catalogue and promotes literacy events and book culture.
- Parents – Engage with home reading activities, FlashAcademy dashboards, and the GEMS Reading Challenge.

5. Cultural and Linguistic Inclusion

GEMS Cambridge International School celebrates its diverse, multilingual community. Cultural and linguistic inclusion is at the heart of this policy, ensuring that every learner feels valued and represented. The school promotes the development of both English and first languages as key assets in global citizenship.

Inclusive practice includes differentiated resources, multilingual displays, peer support systems, and recognition of cultural festivals. Students are encouraged to share their languages and heritage through classroom projects, assemblies, and reading events.

6. Referral

We recognise the importance of early identification, assessment, and timely intervention for students who may have English as an Additional Language (EAL) need. All teachers, across all year groups and sections, share responsibility for identifying students who may require additional support, including those who enroll at different points during the academic year.

The following procedure is followed to determine a student's eligibility for the EAL Program:

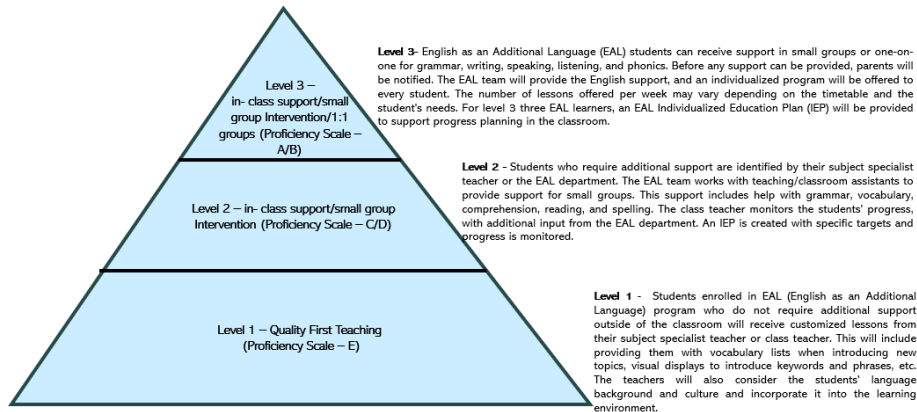
1. When a teacher identifies a student who may require EAL support, a referral form is completed and submitted to the EAL Team.
2. The EAL Team seeks parental consent to carry out screening assessments and, based on the outcomes, places the student at the appropriate level of support within the program.
3. Throughout the process, the EAL Team maintains regular communication with parents, ensuring they are informed, consulted, and updated on progress and next steps.

Identification of Enrolled Students

For students who are already enrolled at the school, the following sources of information are considered as part of the identification process:

- Standardised assessments
- Benchmark testing
- Ongoing classroom-based assessments

Based on the evidence gathered, the EAL Team will assign the student to one of the appropriate EAL support levels.



The levels assigned will guide the provision of appropriate support and resources for the student's English language learning journey. It ensures that each student receives tailored assistance to meet their language needs.

6. Support

6.1 Levels of Support

All teachers are teachers of English Language Learners and therefore remain responsible for the teaching and learning of all students in their care. Teachers are expected to identify students who may be experiencing learning challenges and, in collaboration with the Inclusion Team, ensure that those requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage, including students who may not have been identified through the admissions process.

Students may be referred to the EAL Lead upon entry to the school or at any point during their time at the school. A range of assessment and screening tools are used to identify potential barriers to learning, as outlined in Section 5 of this policy.

In line with the school's Inclusion Policy and its graduated approach to support, we recognise that EAL needs exist on a continuum. Students identified as EAL are allocated an appropriate level of support based on their language proficiency and learning needs.

Level 1 – Universal Support (High-Quality Teaching)

Students enrolled in the EAL program who do not require additional support outside the classroom receive tailored support through high-quality, inclusive classroom practice delivered by the class teacher or subject specialist.

This may include:

- Pre-teaching and reinforcement of key vocabulary
- Use of visual aids and displays to support understanding
- Scaffolding of language tasks
- Consideration of students' linguistic background and cultural context within lessons

This level of support is available to all students, including those with and without SEN, and typically applies to learners at the *emerging* and *developing* stages of English acquisition.

The EAL Lead works closely with subject teachers to provide guidance and strategies to support individual needs through inclusive and personalised classroom practice.

Level 1 provision may include:

- Personalised planning and differentiated resources
- Assistive technology
- Quality First Teaching

Level 2 – Targeted Support

Students requiring additional support are identified by subject teachers or the EAL Department. The EAL team works alongside classroom assistants and teachers to provide targeted small-group support focusing on:

- Grammar
- Vocabulary development
- Reading comprehension
- Spelling and writing skills

Progress is monitored by the class teacher with ongoing input from the EAL team.

Support at this level may include:

- Weekly targeted pull-out sessions
- Peer/buddy support
- Adapted classroom seating arrangements
- Individual Education Plan (IEP), where appropriate

Level 3 – Specialist Support

Students with more significant EAL needs may receive intensive support in small groups or on a one-to-one basis, targeting:

- Grammar and sentence structure
- Writing skills
- Speaking and listening
- Phonics and early literacy development

Parents will be informed prior to the commencement of this level of support. The EAL team will deliver a personalised program tailored to each student's needs. The frequency of sessions will depend on timetable availability and the student's learning profile.

Students at this level will be provided with an EAL-specific Individual Education Plan (IEP) to support structured progress in the classroom.

Provision at this level may include:

- Participation in a structured language program (e.g. *Flash Academy*)
- External specialist support, where appropriate
- Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Buddy support
- Assistive technology

6.2 Consulting and Involving Parents

The school is committed to working in partnership with parents. Early discussions will take place with students and their parents when EAL needs are identified to ensure that:

- A clear understanding is developed of the student's strengths and areas of difficulty
- Parents' views and concerns are fully considered
- Agreed outcomes for the student are clearly understood
- Next steps and support arrangements are transparent

Records of these discussions will be added to the student's file and shared with parents. Parents will be formally notified when EAL provision is put in place and will be asked to sign a consent form.

During Parent–Teacher meetings, parents will have the opportunity to meet with the EAL teacher. In addition, parents will be contacted at least once per term to provide updates on their child's progress.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

This EAL Policy will be reviewed by the Principal and Head of Inclusion and Deputy SENCO every year. It will also be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year.