



EDUCATION

We see **genius** in every child

**EAL Policy**

GEMS Cambridge International School, Dubai



مدرسة كامبردج انترناشيونال  
Cambridge International School, Dubai

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## 1. Introduction

GEMS Cambridge International School is dedicated to promoting inclusion and embracing students from diverse backgrounds, including students who have English as an Additional Language (EAL). We recognise that every student has unique life experiences and needs, including language development, and we are committed to addressing these needs to ensure that language barriers do not hinder their learning journey. We believe in providing the best possible provision for students of all abilities. Teaching and learning are planned so that each child can aspire to the highest level of personal achievement, and we believe all students, no matter their starting point and initial barriers to learning, can go on to achieve high performance.

The linguistic and cultural diversity of the school's population is considered a strength and a rich resource in promoting language learning among students. The school seeks to enable students to function as international citizens, which is one of GEMS' core values and entails the ability to function capably and comfortably within and between cultures. Developing the capacity to speak more than one language is an integral part of this preparation and, as a result, additional language instruction has been made available. The language of instruction used to deliver the curriculum is English. Students admitted to the school are taught the skills to become proficient readers, writers, and communicators in English for social interaction and academic success. The mother tongue or first language is the one the individual is most proficient in and is often used at home. The development of the first language is encouraged through an ethos of acceptance and celebration of linguistic diversity within the community. There is also recognition that a strong level of competency in the first language can be an important ingredient in their success as learners of additional languages. However, it is important to recognise the need for English to be spoken in formal and informal contexts to ensure language development.

The concept of inclusive education lies at the heart of effective education. It encompasses diversity, personalisation, equity, respect, acceptance, and enrichment. When we improve the quality of inclusion within our schools, we improve education for all. Inclusive education happens when children with different learning needs (ExI, ELL, SEND) participate and learn together in the same classes. CIS supports inclusive education and admits students irrespective of their gender, race, disability, or educational needs, if CIS can meet their needs without unduly prejudicing other pupils' education and welfare.

This English as an Additional Language (EAL) policy is designed to provide guidelines and support for non-native English speakers at GEMS Cambridge International School in Dubai. The policy aims to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities and that they are supported in developing their English language proficiency to succeed academically and socially.

## **2. Aims & Objectives**

To promote equity of EAL services across CIS phases, there is a need for consistent guidelines to:

Set parameters within which services are provided, establish a consistent academic language within our school, and recognise the need for flexibility in delivery.

Our objectives for this policy are to:

- Achieve the expected learning outcomes of the grade-level curriculum standards.
- Develop students' individual potential through in-class strategies and intervention so they can fully access the curriculum (and other educational opportunities).
- Acquire the language proficiency, skills, learning strategies and interpersonal skills needed to succeed in school and contribute positively to society.
- To clarify among staff, students and parents about students receiving learning support, the nature of learning differences and how they can best be supported within an inclusive community.
- To provide information to staff on EAL, the process of EAL student identification and the EAL referral procedures.
- To increase communication and consistency between the EAL department and classroom teachers.
- To ensure that we recognize and meet the needs of pupils who require EAL support.

## **3. Definition**

**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.

## **4. Roles & Responsibilities**

### **4.1 The Principal**

The Principal Stephen Brecken will:

- Work with the Head of Inclusion to determine the strategic development of the EAL Policy and provision within the school.
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of EAL students across the school.

### **4.2 Head of Inclusion**

The Head of Inclusion (Kirstie Clark), supported by the Deputy SENCO (Kanchan Panjwani)

- Work with the Principal to determine the strategic development of the EAL Policy and provision in the school.
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the EAL Policy and the coordination of specific provisions made to support individual students who are EAL.
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that students with EAL receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing EAL support.
- Be the point of contact for parents of students who are EAL.
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all students with EAL up to date.
- Implement and maintain personal profiles for EAL students.

**Each teacher is responsible for:**

- The progress and development of every student in their class.
- Working closely with any teaching assistants/learning support assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.
- Working with the Head of Inclusion and Deputy SENCO to review each student's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision.
- Ensuring they follow EAL Policy

## 5. Identification of EAL Students

### 5.1 Identification of EAL Students

During the admission process, the following may indicate that a student needs some level of English language support:

- EAL is indicated on the admissions form.
- The student's mother tongue/first language is not English.
- The student is currently attending a school in a non-English-speaking country.
- The student is currently attending a school where English is not the medium of instruction.
- The student demonstrates low levels of English proficiency or literacy based on reports.
- The data from the CIS entrance test (EYFS to Year 1 – written assessment and speaking assessment (and Year 2 upwards use CAT4 Assessment) or the information in the admissions file indicates that the student is operating at a significantly lower level than the expected year group in Literacy.

Identifying English Language Learner (ELL) students in school is crucial in providing them with the support and resources to succeed academically.

- The starting point is the use of standardized GL tests to identify the ELL Students.
- Students are further screened, and the proficiency levels of the student are determined. These assessments evaluate students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English.
- Teachers play a crucial role in identifying ELL students based on their interactions in the classroom. Teachers may observe students struggling with English language skills, comprehension, or participation in class activities. They may also notice patterns of language use or difficulty in understanding academic content.
- Teachers can provide valuable input regarding students' language proficiency levels and academic performance, which can supplement the formal assessment process.

## Referral

We acknowledge the significance of early identification, assessment, and intervention for students who may have EAL needs. All teachers, across all grades and sections, share the responsibility of identifying students who may require intervention, including those who join the school at different times during the academic year.

The following steps should be followed to determine a student's eligibility for the EAL Program:

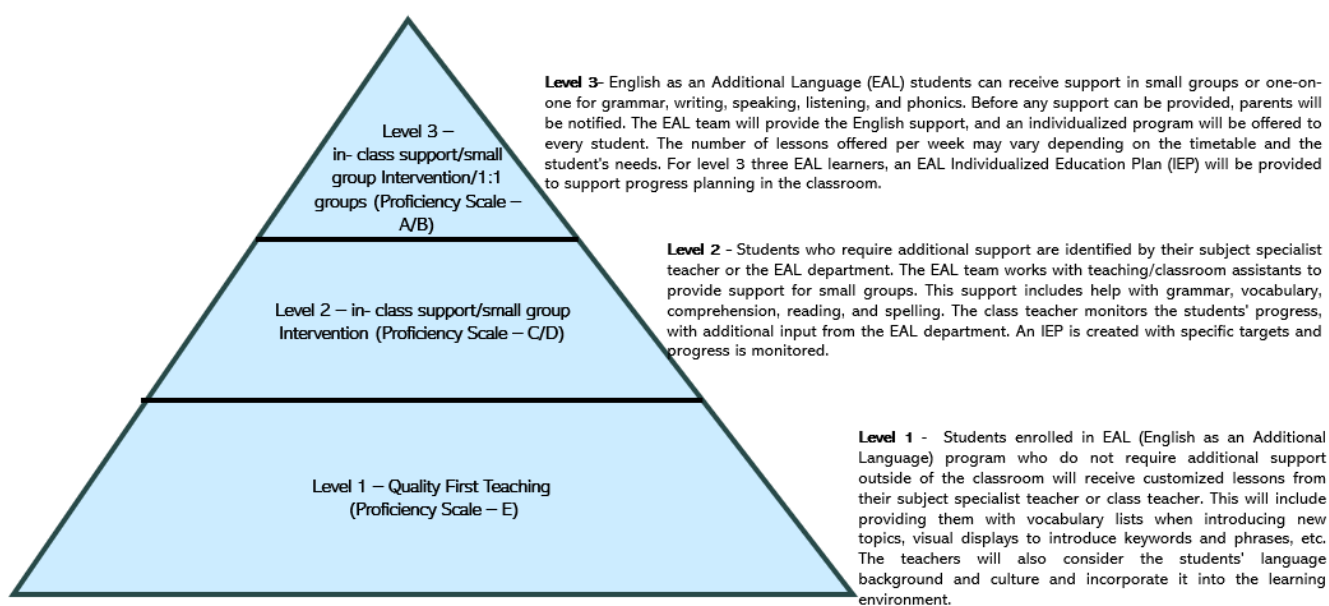
1. Upon identifying a student who may require intervention the teacher fills in a referral form.
2. The EAL Team will obtain parental consent to screen the student and, based on the results, place the student in the right level of the Program.
3. Throughout this process, the EAL team will inform and engage with the parents, seeking their input and updating them on developments.

## Identification of Enrolled Students.

For students already enrolled in the school, the following is taken into consideration;

- Standardised Tests
- Benchmark testing
- On-going Assessments

Based on results, the EAL team will assign the student to one of the following 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. EAL Support

### 6.1 Levels of Support

All teachers are teachers of English Language Learners and as such they continue to remain responsible for the teaching and learning for their students. All teachers are responsible for identifying students experiencing learning challenges, and in collaboration with the Inclusion team, they will ensure that those students requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage (when they have not been identified through our admission process).

Students can be referred to the EAL Lead on entry or at any point during their education at the school. We use a range of tools to identify possible barriers to learning as outlined in Section 5 of this policy.

In line with our Inclusion policy which uses a graduated approach, we recognise that there is a **continuum** of EAL needs. Students identified as EAL through the level system are assigned to a level of support.

#### Level 1

Students enrolled in EAL (English as an Additional Language) program who do not require additional support outside of the classroom will receive customised lessons from their subject specialist teacher or class teacher. This will include providing them with vocabulary lists when introducing new topics, visual displays to introduce keywords and phrases, etc. The teachers will also consider the students' language background and culture and incorporate it into the learning environment.

This level describes the support available to all students, including those with and without SEN, and students in the 'emerging and developing' levels. Within the Graduated Approach, at the first Level, needs are met through High-Quality Teaching. EAL lead supports liaise with subject teachers to provide strategies to accommodate individual differences and abilities through high quality inclusive and personalised classroom practice.

Level 1 provision may include one or more of the following:

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



## **Level 2**

Students who require additional support are identified by their subject specialist teacher or the EAL department. The EAL team works with teaching/classroom assistants to support small groups. This support includes help with grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, reading, and spelling. The class teacher monitors the students' progress, with additional input from the EAL department.

- Students can have weekly pullout sessions in focused areas.
- Buddy support
- Classroom seating plan
- IEP

## **Level 3**

English as an Additional Language (EAL) students can receive support in small groups or one-on-one for grammar, writing, speaking, listening, and phonics. Before any support can be provided, parents will be notified. The EAL team will provide the English support, and an individualized program will be offered to every student. The number of weekly lessons may vary depending on the timetable and the student's needs. For tier three EAL learners, an EAL Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be provided to support progress planning in the classroom.

- Students will follow a robust program – Flash Academy
- May have external support
- IEP
- Buddy support
- Assistive technology

## **6.2 Consulting and involving parents**

We will have an early discussion with the students and their parents when identifying whether they need EAL provision. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the student's areas of strength and difficulty
- We consider the parents' concerns
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the student
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the student's record and given to their parents. We will formally notify parents when it is decided that a pupil will receive EAL support. Parents sign a letter of agreement.

At Parent-Teacher meetings, we ensure that parents meet with the EAL teacher. In addition, parents are called once a term to update 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. The governing board will approve it.

