



Falkner House

English as an additional Language (EAL) Policy

Nursery - Year 6 including EYFS.

Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by the Equality Act 2010, which requires schools to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination. Pupils with EAL may fall within the protected characteristics of race or ethnicity, and Falkner House ensures they are not disadvantaged due to language background. It also aligns with the SEND Code of Practice (2014), which recognises that pupils with EAL are not necessarily pupils with special educational needs. However, careful assessment is necessary to determine whether a pupil's needs arise from English language acquisition or from underlying learning difficulties.

EAL

At Falkner House, a pupil is considered to have English as an Additional Language (EAL) if their first language — the language first encountered in early childhood — is not English. This includes pupils who continue to use another language at home, even if they are fluent in English. EAL status refers specifically to the pupil's language background and is distinct from any additional learning needs. Identification of EAL pupils at Falkner House is based on an individual assessment rather than a rigid formula. We consider whether another language is actively spoken at home and whether that language remains more dominant than English. Parental input is an important part of this process. Pupils may join the school with EAL status and later transition out of it as their English becomes more dominant.

Introduction

Falkner House is committed to providing an outstanding education for all pupils, including those categorised with English as an additional language (EAL). This policy is part of the wider goal to include all pupils, treat them equally and help them make excellent progress. Falkner House acknowledges that maintaining two or more languages has potential advantages and should not necessarily be seen as a barrier to learning and engagement.

As a central London school, Falkner House has a richly diverse community, with many families having international backgrounds. These families are often long-term residents in the UK, and many hold British nationality. While children's home languages are respected and supported, English is the language of the school environment. We recognise that parents typically value and expect the use of English, and that pupils often adopt English as their primary language of communication in school. However, we remain sensitive to the linguistic and cultural identities of all our pupils.



The EAL Policy aims to:

1. Provide inclusive education: Ensure that EAL pupils are fully integrated into the school community and can access the entire curriculum.
2. Support academic progress: Enable EAL pupils to make good progress through inclusive teaching and, where necessary, targeted support.
3. Develop language proficiency: Support the development of English language skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, embedded within the curriculum.
4. Foster a supportive environment: Create a welcoming and respectful environment where EAL pupils feel valued, confident, and able to contribute fully to school life.

Entry to Falkner House

Nursery Entry is by date of registration and EAL children may well come into the Nursery with limited English. Any child whose English is less than fluent is given help and support (which could mean supporting their use of the home language in play and learning) so as to support their acquisition of fluency in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, teachers will explore the child's skills in the home language with parents to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay.

Main School For entry at 4+ or afterwards, pupils secure a place through a rigorous assessment process. This process helps to ensure that all pupils offered a place have the level of English required to access the curriculum at Falkner House. Once at Falkner House pupils who have EAL are immediately integrated within the classroom. Whilst pupils are expected to have this foundational proficiency on entry, we recognise that language development is an ongoing process. Teachers support the continued development of pupils' academic English in lessons. Additional input is provided, as necessary with such input being monitored and evaluated. Please also refer to the Admissions policy.

Noting EAL pupils On or before arrival at Falkner House, discussion is had with parents as to whether their child has EAL. A list of these pupils is maintained on the School's information management system and is accessible by all staff and is reviewed at least termly - teachers must know which pupils in their class have EAL.

Supporting EAL Pupils In most cases, teachers can use inclusive teaching strategies that support EAL pupils within the classroom. Adaptations should only be considered if the pupil's EAL status presents a barrier to learning. If such challenges arise, the following strategies are recommended to support EAL pupils effectively:

- pre-teach vocabulary;
- explain idiomatic expressions, or avoid them if they cause confusion;
- check that a pupil has understood what is required by asking them to repeat back instructions;
- use visual illustrations and provide context e.g. cultural context;



- explicitly teach the meaning of command words in essay questions e.g. ‘evaluate’, ‘discuss’, ‘explore’, ‘compare’, and help with grammar/spelling/style issues when they emerge in written work. The more complex the ideas being discussed, the more likely that such errors will occur;
- give appropriate scaffolding for certain tasks which require sophisticated English; and
- offer additional English support for those children who may struggle with the subject (which will often include EAL children), this can happen before/during/after the school day (eg. instead of Spanish).

If the above strategies are insufficient in helping the EAL pupil make progress, the teacher will discuss with the headteacher the potential need for further tailored support and/or an IEP (see SEN policy for further details). While we do not offer timetabled EAL lessons, by adhering to the principles and practices outlined above, we aim to create an environment where pupils with EAL can thrive academically, socially, and personally, contributing positively to the school community.