



English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

Owner: Deputy Head Academic

Approving Body: Teaching and Learning Committee

Date of last Review: September 2025

Date of next Review: September 2026

Linked Policies:

- Curriculum Policy
- Admissions Policy

Introduction

Most of the girls who join Woldingham School are from families with English as a first language. However, the School also welcome many girls from overseas to the school for whom English is an additional language. On arrival in September, these girls undertake an online placement test to identify their strengths and weaknesses in the use of English and determine their CEFR level.

Woldingham Staff provide support and help students with EAL needs during lessons by making use of the following teaching strategies:

- Using picture and video whenever possible to aid understanding
- Providing examples and samples prior to an activity
- Using translated subject glossaries
- Allowing students to use dictionaries and electronic translators during lessons
- Grouping the student with strong English peer models
- Identifying and pre-teaching key words and phrases
- Regularly checking the student has understood instructions
- Providing tailored tasks for students with language needs
- Grading their language and speaking slowly
- Allowing thinking time and providing sentence starters

When additional EAL support is necessary, tuition in small groups is arranged for as long as is deemed necessary by the Head of EAL. Depending on the girl's needs, this can range from three to four group lessons a fortnight to one-to-one support with an EAL specialist. The School aims to timetable these lessons as part of the student's curriculum, and they are provided by specialized teachers in the EAL Department. When an initial assessment shows low level of English upon enrolment, students may be asked to drop a subject to be able to have more EAL language support.

Students' progress is closely monitored, and parents are kept regularly informed about their daughter's performance by the department's teachers. The School has found that students from overseas achieve good results and quickly become part of the school community thanks to the improvement in their spoken fluency, which enables them to feel more confident and thrive in their studies.

Details of courses

One-year students

The School usually prepares one-year students for the English as a Second Language Cambridge Examinations *PET and FCE* according to their ability in English. The aim is to ensure that each girl acquires the skills needed to comprehend and communicate in good, accurate English as well as passing these external examinations at the end of the academic year. These examinations take place in an external official centre, with the EAL department organising the registration of students.

Years 7, 8 & 9

Long-term students whose English is not sufficiently developed to cope with the curriculum will have three to four lessons a fortnight of EAL support. During these lessons, students will work on improving their vocabulary and building their oral fluency. They will also focus on improving writing fluency and reading comprehension so they can gradually build their academic skills and perform better in other subjects.

Year 10 & 11

International students taking *iGCSE* examinations will sometimes require additional EAL support to achieve the best possible standard in their studies. The School's goal is to ensure that each girl acquires the necessary language skills to achieve their target grade so, whenever possible, small EAL groups are organized to support them with their language studies. The number of lessons provided for these support classes will vary according to need and the staffing available.

Some Year 10 students for whom English is not a first language will be enrolled in *International GCSE English as a Second Language*, which is a two-year course that concentrates on building their academic reading, writing, listening and speaking ability.

Lower Sixth

On entry to Sixth Form, all students for whom English is an additional language take a placement test to determine how proficient their academic English is. They are then placed in appropriate groups for *IELTS* (International English Language Test System) preparation lessons, of which there is one a week. Students will be responsible to register and take the *IELTS* exam in an official centre by the end of the Easter break at the latest, so as to have gained an appropriate IELTS grade before the start of Upper 6th.

121 Extra Language Support

Upon arrival, all international students complete an online and written assessment to determine their level of English within the CEFR. If the results show that the student's language level is below the average expected for the year group, the Head of EAL will contact parents with feedback, as well as an intervention plan to ensure that the student has the necessary support needed both at school and at home. In this case, group lessons as well as individual lessons with a language specialist will be timetabled.

EAL EXAMINATIONS FOR SHORT-TERM STUDENTS

Years	Course	Examination
7 and 8	Cambridge Preliminary English Test (PET)	Cambridge English Language Assessment ESOL
9	Cambridge First Certificate in English (FCE)	
10 & 11	Cambridge Advanced Examination (CAE)	
L6th	IELTS (International English Language Testing System)	Cambridge English Language Assessment British Council

EAL COURSES FOR LONG-TERM STUDENTS

Years	Teaching approach and course book used
Years 7 to 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicative course focusing on building reading, writing and listening skills. Compact PET (Cambridge University Press) Compact FCE (Cambridge University Press) Oxford Discover Futures Level 2 (Oxford University Press) Oxford Discover Futures Level 3 (Year 7) Oxford Discover Futures Level 4 (Year 8) Oxford Discover Futures Level 5 (Year 9)
Years 10 and 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong emphasis on developing academic language and writing accuracy and fluency IGCSE English as a Second Language (Pearson) Test your English Vocabulary in Use (Cambridge University Press)
6 th Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialized IELTS exam preparation course Complete IELTS (Cambridge University Press)

The EAL Department encourages students to read for pleasure to develop their writing fluency and overall vocabulary knowledge. The EAL department also provides students with a **reading list** specially created for each year group to help students read a suitable book aimed at their level and age.