

Policy for English as a Second Language

This document which applies to the whole college inclusive of boarding is publicly available on the college website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the college office.

Scope: All who work, volunteer or supply services to our college have an equal responsibility to understand and implement this policy and its procedures both within and outside of normal college hours, including activities away from college. All new employees and volunteers are required to state that they have read, understood and will abide by this policy and its procedural documents and confirm this by signing the Policies Register.

Legal Status: Complies with The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations currently in force.

Monitoring and Review: These arrangements are subject to continuous monitoring, refinement, and audit by the Co-Principal, who will undertake a full annual review, inclusive of its implementation and the efficiency with which the related duties have been implemented. This review will be formally documented in writing. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay. All staff will be informed of the updated/reviewed arrangements and it will be made available to them in writing or electronically.

Reviewed: August 2025

Next Review: August 2026

Signed

David Game
Co-Principal and Founder

John Dalton
Co-Principal

This policy is a statement of our College's aims and strategies to ensure that ESL students fulfil their potential.

Introduction

All students need to feel safe, accepted and valued in order to learn. For students who are learning English as a second language, this includes recognising and valuing their home language and background. As a College, we are aware that bilingualism is valuable and that ESL students have a special contribution to make. We take a whole College approach towards our ethos, curriculum, equal opportunities policy and language awareness.

Students who have English as a second language (ESL) face several challenges when learning GCSEs and A-levels due to the complex linguistic demands of these courses. Firstly, the academic language used in these exams is often more advanced and specialised, requiring a deep understanding of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax, which can be particularly challenging for ESL students. These students might struggle with understanding exam questions, interpreting nuanced meanings, or expressing their knowledge clearly in written form, which can hinder their performance even if they grasp the subject matter well. Additionally, the cultural references and

idiomatic expressions embedded in texts, especially in subjects like English Literature or History, can be difficult for ESL students to fully comprehend. This lack of cultural familiarity can make it harder for them to engage with the content as deeply as their native English-speaking peers.

ESL students often need more time to process information in English, which can make it difficult to keep up with the fast-paced nature of GCSE and A-level courses. The pressure to perform well in a non-native language can also lead to increased anxiety and stress, further impacting their learning experience. Despite these challenges, with appropriate support, such as additional language instruction, tutoring, and accommodations during exams, ESL students can overcome these barriers and succeed in their studies.

Critical to the success of any ESL teaching is that student's level of English be understood as soon as they arrive (through ALIS, YELLIS, and formal English testing, and engagement) and the triangulation of their teacher, the ESL teacher and the relevant Head of Year through the academic year to ensure progress.

Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to raise awareness of the College's obligations and to support the planning, organisation, teaching and assessment procedures, and the use of resources and strategies to meet the needs of students who have English as a second language (ESL) and so to raise student achievement.

College context

- At David Game College, ESL students come from a variety of backgrounds. Some are from well-established paths such as Iran and China, while others are completely new to the language and culture of this country.
- Many ESL students are isolated learners and may be the only speaker of their language in their class or in the College.
- Many students have attended Kensington Academy of English or other language schools and have a reasonable level of English.
- A few of our students may have experienced trauma and this will have an impact on their learning. For example, students who have come from Syria or from war-torn regions.
- There are more than twenty languages spoken at David Game College.

Context of the College

At David Game College there are many students who are learning English as a second language.

Information is gathered about:

- students' linguistic background and competence in other language/s
- students' previous educational experience
- students' family and biographical background

A member of staff is nominated to have responsibility for ESL. Currently this is Maria Samsonova/Catherine Cowen.

Key Principles of additional language acquisition

- Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied in each curriculum area. Meanings and understanding cannot be assumed but must be made explicit.
- Language is central to our identity. Therefore, the home languages of all students and staff should be recognised and valued. Students should be encouraged to maintain their home language and use in the College environment wherever possible.
- Although many students acquire the ability to communicate on a day to day basis in English quite quickly, the level of language needed for academic study is much deeper and more detailed, and can require continuing support for up to ten years.

- Language develops best when used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum.
- The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and included in planning.
- Teaching and support staff play a crucial role in modelling uses of language.
- Knowledge and skills developed in learning the first language aid the acquisition of additional languages.
- A clear distinction should be made between ESL and Special Educational Needs.

Assessment

- All ESL students are entitled to assessments as required.
- The Minority Ethnic Achievement Service (MEAS) may be requested to visit College. They will assess and monitor students, give support and guidance to staff and direct support to prioritised students.
- Staff have regular liaison time to discuss student progress, needs and targets.
- Progress in the acquisition of English is regularly assessed and monitored. This may be achieved by using the David Game Profile for Students who have English as an Additional Language.
- Assessment methods are checked for cultural bias and action is taken to remove any that is identified.
- Consideration and sensitivity is given to the appropriateness of testing ESL students at the earlier stages of English acquisition.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

- Targets for ESL students are appropriate, challenging and reviewed on a regular basis.
- Ensuring that the College has suitably trained and dedicated staff who can teach ESL
- Planning for ESL students incorporates both curriculum and ESL specific objectives.
- Staff regularly observe, assess and record information about students' developing use of language.
- When planning the curriculum, staff take account of the linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds of families.

Teaching Strategies

- Classroom activities have clear learning objectives and use appropriate materials and support to enable students to participate in lessons.
- Key language features of each curriculum area, eg key vocabulary, uses of language, forms of text, are identified.
- Enhanced opportunities are provided for speaking and listening, including both process and presentational talk, and use made of drama techniques and role play. Students have access to effective staff and peer models of spoken language.
- Additional visual support is provided, eg posters, pictures, photographs, objects, demonstration, use of gesture.
- Additional verbal support is provided, eg repetition, modelling, peer support.
- Use is made of collaborative activities that involve purposeful talk and encourage and support active participation.
- Where possible, learning progression moves from the concrete to the abstract.
- Discussion is provided before, during and after reading and writing activities.
- Scaffolding is provided for language and learning, eg talk frames, writing frames.
- Ensure that there is provision for ESL aimed at individual subjects e.g. ESL for Business or Biology

Students who have English as a second language (ESL) face several challenges when learning GCSEs and A-levels due to the complex linguistic demands of these courses. Firstly, the academic language used in these exams is

David Game College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all children fulfil their potential

often more advanced and specialized, requiring a deep understanding of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax, which can be particularly challenging for ESL students. These students might struggle with understanding exam questions, interpreting nuanced meanings, or expressing their knowledge clearly in written form, which can hinder their performance even if they grasp the subject matter well.

Additionally, the cultural references and idiomatic expressions embedded in texts, especially in subjects like English Literature or History, can be difficult for ESL students to fully comprehend. This lack of cultural familiarity can make it harder for them to engage with the content as deeply as their native English-speaking peers. Moreover, ESL students often need more time to process information in English, which can make it difficult to keep up with the fast-paced nature of GCSE and A-level courses. The pressure to perform well in a non-native language can also lead to increased anxiety and stress, further impacting their learning experience. Despite these challenges, with appropriate support, such as additional language instruction, tutoring, and accommodations during exams, ESL students can overcome these barriers and succeed in their studies.

Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in the UK requires specific strategies to address the unique needs of learners. Key strategies include:

1. Use of Visual Aids and Realia

- **Visual Supports:** Incorporating images, diagrams, charts, and other visual aids helps ESL students understand new vocabulary and concepts. Using real-life objects (realia) also aids in making abstract concepts more concrete.

2. Scaffolding Instruction

- **Building on Prior Knowledge:** Break down complex information into smaller, more manageable parts and connect new concepts to what students already know. Gradually remove these supports as students gain confidence and mastery.

3. Emphasising Vocabulary Development

- **Contextual Vocabulary Teaching:** Focus on teaching vocabulary in context rather than in isolation. Use word maps, flashcards, and interactive activities to reinforce vocabulary learning. Prioritise high-frequency words and subject-specific terminology.

4. Differentiated Instruction

- **Tailored Learning Experiences:** Adapt lessons to meet the varying proficiency levels of students. This can include modifying tasks, providing additional resources, or offering varying levels of complexity within the same activity.

5. Interactive and Collaborative Learning

- **Group Work and Peer Learning:** Encourage pair or group activities where students can practise speaking, listening, and collaborating. Grouping ESL students with more proficient speakers can promote language acquisition through social interaction.

6. Focused Language Skills Development

- **Balanced Skill Practice:** Provide balanced instruction across the four key language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Tailor activities that specifically target areas where students need the most practice.

7. Encouraging Use of L1 (Native Language)

- **Strategic Use of Native Language:** Allow students to use their first language (L1) as a bridge to learning English, especially when grappling with difficult concepts. Translanguaging, or moving between languages, can enhance comprehension and retention.

8. Culturally Responsive Teaching

- **Incorporating Students' Backgrounds:** Integrate students' cultural backgrounds into lessons to make learning more relevant and engaging. This approach also helps to build a more inclusive classroom environment.

9. Use of Technology and Language Apps

- **Digital Tools:** Leverage language learning apps, online games, and interactive software to provide additional practice and exposure. Technology can offer personalised learning experiences and immediate feedback.

10. Regular Assessment and Feedback

- **Formative Assessments:** Conduct regular, low-stakes assessments to monitor progress and identify areas that need more focus. Provide constructive feedback that is specific, actionable, and supportive to encourage improvement.

11. Fostering a Positive Learning Environment

- **Encouragement and Patience:** Create a safe, supportive classroom atmosphere where students feel comfortable making mistakes and taking risks in their language learning. Consistent positive reinforcement boosts confidence and motivation.

12. Language Immersion

- **Exposure to Authentic Language Use:** Encourage immersion in English through reading books, watching videos, or participating in conversations outside of class. Real-world exposure helps solidify language skills and promotes practical application.

These strategies, when combined effectively, can significantly enhance the learning experience for ESL students, helping them to overcome language barriers and succeed in their studies.

Materials

Our College provides appropriate materials such as language text books, dictionaries and key word lists. Videos, maps, I.C.T. and story props also give crucial support.

Special Educational Needs and Gifted and Talented Students

- Most ESL students needing additional support do not have SEN.
- Should SEN be identified, ESL students have equal access to College's SEN provision.
- If ESL students are identified as Gifted and Talented, they have equal access to the College's provision.

Parental/Community Involvement

Staff strive to encourage parental and community involvement by:

- providing a welcoming induction process for newly arrived students and their families/carers.
 - using plain English and translators and interpreters, where appropriate and available, to ensure good
- David Game College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all children fulfil their potential*

spoken and written communications.

- identifying linguistic, cultural and religious background of students and establishing contact with wider community where possible.
- celebrating and acknowledging the achievements of ESL students in the wider community.
- recognising and encouraging the use of first language.
- helping parents understand how they can support their children at home, especially by continuing the development of their first language.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers a range of tools and resources that can significantly enhance the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL). Here are several ways AI can assist in this area:

1. Personalised Learning

- **Adaptive Learning Platforms:** AI can create tailored learning experiences by assessing each student's language proficiency and adapting lessons accordingly. These platforms can adjust the difficulty level of exercises, focus on areas where a student struggles, and pace the content to match their learning speed. This personalised approach ensures that students receive instruction that meets their individual needs, making the learning process more effective.

2. Language Practice and Feedback

- **AI-Powered Language Apps:** Tools like Duolingo or Babbel use AI to offer interactive language practice. These apps provide exercises in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, offering instant feedback to help students correct mistakes and reinforce learning. AI can also analyse a student's spoken language, providing feedback on pronunciation, accent, and fluency, which is especially valuable for improving spoken English.

3. Automated Assessment

- **Instant Grading and Analysis:** AI can automate the assessment process, offering instant grading for quizzes, assignments, and even essays. This not only saves teachers time but also provides students with immediate feedback, helping them to quickly identify and correct errors. AI can also track progress over time, allowing both students and teachers to monitor improvement and adjust learning strategies as needed.

4. Enhanced Reading and Writing Tools

- **Natural Language Processing (NLP):** AI-driven tools like Grammarly or QuillBot can help ESL students improve their writing by checking for grammar, punctuation, and style errors. These tools also suggest alternative phrasing and word choices, helping students to expand their vocabulary and develop more sophisticated writing skills. For reading, AI can simplify complex texts, highlight key information, and provide definitions for difficult words, making reading materials more accessible.

5. Speech Recognition and Pronunciation Practice

- **AI-Powered Speech Tools:** Speech recognition technology helps students practise pronunciation and speaking skills. Tools like Google Assistant or AI language tutors can listen to students' speech and provide feedback on pronunciation, intonation, and fluency. This allows students to practise speaking in a low-pressure environment, building their confidence before they engage in real conversations.

6. Translation and Language Support

- **Real-Time Translation:** AI translation tools, such as Google Translate, can assist ESL students by providing real-time translations of words, phrases, or entire documents. While translation isn't a substitute for learning, it can help students understand new content and bridge gaps in their vocabulary, particularly in the early stages of language learning.

7. Gamification and Engagement

- **Interactive Learning:** AI can create gamified learning experiences that make language learning more engaging. By turning language exercises into games, students are more motivated to practise regularly. AI adapts the difficulty of these games to match the student's level, ensuring that they are both challenging and achievable.

8. Virtual Classrooms and Tutors

- **AI Tutors:** Virtual AI tutors can provide one-on-one support to students, offering explanations, answering questions, and guiding them through lessons. These tutors are available 24/7, providing students with learning support whenever they need it. AI can also facilitate virtual classrooms where students interact with AI avatars or bots that simulate conversation practice in real-world scenarios.

9. Cultural Context and Language Usage

- **Contextual Learning:** AI can help ESL students understand not just the language, but also the cultural context in which it is used. By analysing large datasets, AI can offer insights into how language is used in different social contexts, helping students learn idiomatic expressions, slang, and cultural nuances that are essential for fluency.

10. Teacher Support and Professional Development

- **AI Tools for Educators:** AI can assist teachers by providing resources such as lesson plans, grading tools, and student progress reports. It can also offer professional development opportunities, guiding teachers in using AI effectively in their classrooms and staying updated on the latest language teaching methodologies.

This policy is to be reviewed by John Dalton in August 2025