

English as an Additional Language Policy

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1. Introduction

Mill Hill Education Group (the 'Group') is the trading name of The Mill Hill School Foundation (the 'Foundation'). It is a group of independent mainstream Schools which together educate girls and boys aged 6 months to 18 years.

Senior Schools (day and boarding)

Mill Hill School
Mill Hill International
Cobham Hall

Pre-Prep and Prep Schools

Lyonsdown School*
Keble Prep*
St Joseph's in the Park*

Pre-Prep / Prep / Senior up to GCSE

Kingshott (ages 3 years to GCSE)*
Abbot's Hill (ages 6 months to GCSE)*

Prep School

Belmont Preparatory School

Pre-Prep School

Grimsdell Pre-Preparatory School*

*schools with EYFS provision

This Policy applies to all of the Schools **except** Mill Hill International which has its own EAL Policy due to its nature as an international school.

2. Rationale

Mill Hill Education Group has many pupils for whom English is an additional or second language (EAL) to their native language. We are entirely committed to ensuring that EAL and/or international pupils at the Group are provided with the best opportunities to enable them to make progress in a British curriculum environment. This is the principal aim of this Policy.

The Group and its staff and wider pupil community value the cultural diversity brought by speakers of other languages. We take steps to ensure that pupils who speak other languages are integrated effectively into their school environment, both academically and pastorally.

EAL pupils are subject to all the normal procedures for learning, teaching and assessment that all pupils are, such as Progress Grades, subject levels and academic reviews.

It is our belief that all teachers are responsible for assisting EAL pupils in their language development. Activities which allow EAL pupils to work on tasks with peers who have English as a first language will enhance their language and social development.

3. Aims

Our main aim is for all EAL pupils to become confident in listening, speaking, reading and writing so that they can access the curriculum and communicate effectively with peers and adults.

We will identify individual pupil's needs, recognise the skills he/she brings to their Group school and ensure that he/she is able to access the curriculum to the best of his/her ability. We take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan. We ensure no pupil is discriminated against, contrary to Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010.

All teaching and support to pupils with EAL does not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Whilst account is taken of EAL development, the Group aims to set appropriate and challenging targets for individual pupils which are reviewed on a regular basis.

We maintain an EAL register, similar to the SEN register, to ensure that we are tracking and monitoring our meeting of the needs of pupils with EAL.

Each School setting has specific aims based on the age and needs of its pupils. These are as follows:

- **Pre-Prep settings:** We recognize the children in our Pre-Prep settings (see table at para 1 Introduction) are young and therefore have a broad range of developing skills. Our creative curriculum recognises that spoken language skills are essential to developing reading and writing. Therefore, the main focus for this age group is to develop strong spoken language skills.
- **Prep settings:** It is the aim of these Schools is to ensure that pupils, including those with EAL, acquire skills in speaking, learning, literacy and numeracy and gain the competence in English to enable them to access the full curriculum and maximise their potential in all subjects. School-wide strategies are used to encourage their participation and increase their understanding and use of English, to become confident and fluent in English.
- **Senior School Pupils:** It is the aim of the Group to improve and extend the EAL learners' competence in English so that they are able to access the curriculum and enable them to pass the exams they need to pursue their academic ambitions.

4. Key Principles

- Language develops best when it is used in purposeful contexts across the curriculum
- The main aim of EAL support is to improve and extend the EAL learners' competence in English language so that they are able to access the curriculum across all subjects
- Effective use of language is crucial to the teaching and learning of every subject
- The language demands of learning tasks need to be identified and planned for. Attention should be given both to initial access and to extension
- Access to learning requires attention to words and meanings embodied in each curriculum area. Meanings and understandings cannot always be assumed but need to be explored
- Teachers have a crucial role in modelling uses of language

- A distinction is made between EAL and Special Educational Needs

In addition, each School has its own key principles based on the age and needs of its pupils. These are as follows:

- **Pre-Prep settings:** Note - EYFS children may still be developing the multi-word stage of language. However, all pupils should become confident to access learning that occurs in the classroom and to communicate socially with their peers.
- **Prep settings:** To enable EAL pupils to access the curriculum in all subjects, be able to contribute to class discussions with confidence and take tests and end of year exams on an equal footing to their peers. EAL pupils will build on their existing knowledge and skills, to make progress both in the classroom and socially with their peers.
- **Senior School Pupils:** To enable EAL pupils to pass the exams they need to pursue their academic ambitions' (depending on the School, this may be the EAL, GCSE, IELTS, IGCSE and the Cambridge EFL qualifications). Pupils will feel confident they can fully participate in learning, school life and communicate socially with their peers.

5. Monitoring and Assessment

- An initial identification of a pupil's additional language has been put in place through the admissions procedure of each Group School
- An initial assessment of an EAL pupil's ability in English is made when he/she enters the Group.
- Information is gathered about:
 - the pupil's linguistic background and competence in other languages
 - the pupil's previous educational and schooling experience
 - the pupil's family and biographical background
- All identified 'Learners of English' who have not been schooled in the UK or have been schooled in the UK for a limited number of years, are assessed in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening within their first half term at their school
- Whilst account is taken of EAL development, the Group aims to set appropriate and challenging targets for individual pupils
- Staff have regular liaison to discuss pupil progress, needs and targets
- The school ensures that all EAL pupils have access to statutory assessments, making full use of special arrangements including first language assessment/support where appropriate

In addition, each School has its own monitoring and assessment processes, as follows:

- **Pre-Prep settings:** Pupils are monitored and assessed using our school-wide assessment procedures.
- **Prep settings:** Pupils are monitored and assessed using the whole school assessment procedures
- **Senior School Pupils:** EAL pupils undertake an English proficiency assessment, to identify the English level of EAL pupils and inform the appropriate route through GCSE (i.e. mainstream English or ESL iGCSE) and A Level (where the level of competency required for different

University courses plays a key role in 16+ provision

6. Teaching and Learning

Each school within the Group shall provide programmes of teaching and learning for its EAL pupils appropriate for their age and ability.

7. Learning Difficulties, SEN and Gifted and Talented Pupils

- Whilst the Group recognises that most EAL pupils needing additional support do not have learning difficulties, should a learning difficulty be identified during assessment, EAL pupils will have equal access to their school's Learning Support provision.
- Similarly, the Group recognises that there may be EAL pupils who are gifted or talented even though they may not be fully fluent in English. Provision is made for them to fulfil their potential.

8. Parents and the Wider Community

- We provide a welcoming admission process for the induction, assessment and support of new arrival pupils and their families/carers
- We take account of parents' linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds through the admissions process and when communicating with them
- We provide an opportunity for EAL parents to discuss their children's progress each term and/or as the need arises with appropriate members of staff
- We aim to work closely with members of the wider community to support our EAL pupils.

9. Review

Date of Review: November 2024

Next Review: Autumn 2026

This policy has been approved by the Executive Team on 19th December 2024.