English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

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Related Documents:	Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 Part 6 of the Equalities Act 2010

Version History

Version	Date	Changes made	Changed by	Approved by
1.00	14.11.2023	Original approved version	SENDCo	Trustees
1.01	22.10.2024	Update to change name of Headteacher	SENDCo	Trustees
1.02	01.04.2025	Updated to change student to learner	SENDCo	Trustees

2.00	14.09.2026	Annual review completed. Clarified EAL support arrangements and admissions requirements; minor amendments throughout.	SENDCo	Trustees

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1. Purpose

Red Balloon of the Air (RBAir) is committed to supporting our learners to make progress academically, personally and socially, and to ensuring that all learners receive high-quality education and support that enables them to thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

This policy supports that overarching aim by making it clear the extent to which we are able to offer suitable support to English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners.

In line with general RBAir aims, our intentions are that learners:

- are able to engage fully in the educational and wellbeing programme on offer;
- are well prepared for life beyond Red Balloon of the Air;
- make informed decisions for themselves.

2. Scope

This EAL policy forms the basis for practice across RBAir and is intended to delineate to what extent our model of multi-modal teaching and learning (online and in-person) allows us to offer support to EAL learners.

RBAir aims to ensure that all EAL learners admitted to an RBAir programme are able:

- to use English confidently and competently.
- to use English as a means of learning across the curriculum
- to be fully included in the RBAir community
- to be supported to reach their full potential

3. Student admissions – all learners

To ensure that a learner is able to access the curriculum, there are minimum requirements and expectations of English competency for all learners, including EAL learners. A reading age of 10+ is needed because the multi-modal model relies heavily on text-based

communication and digital materials. Where appropriate, interpreting or translation support may be used during the admissions process to ensure learners and families can participate fully in discussions about placement and support needs.

Learners with English as an additional language (EAL), as with any learner, will have strengths and weaknesses in different skills. On admission there will be an initial meeting with the parents, and an interpreter may be sought if necessary. This meeting is important in gaining understanding of the learner's starting point and context, and to get to know them as an individual. Information to clarify would include:

- Personality, for example, whether they are normally shy or outspoken
- Proficiency in their native language, and whether they have any issues with articulation or fluency
- Educational background, including whether they have attended school before and whether they may have an existing special educational need or disability (SEND)
- Experience of language at home, including the English language proficiency of the learner's parent(s)/carer(s)

This will enable the identification of the skills the learner needs to develop in order to effectively access the curriculum. These identified needs will also be informed by the demands of the curriculum. Due to the multi-modal nature of RBAir's provision there is the explicit demand for learners to use reading and written text chat as a form of online communication. Learners will need sufficient English language, reading and written communication skills to access the provision safely and effectively.

This may preclude some EAL learners, but it is important that EAL learners are able to access an educational provision that has the resources available and is equipped to support their English language development.

During the admission process, learners may be asked to sit a LUCID Exact diagnostic test This is a screening tool that is primarily used to assess for exam access arrangements, but it is also used to help identify areas of strength and weakness in reading comprehension, speed, fluency and spelling.

4. SEND support

RBAir may admit bilingual or multilingual learners if they have reached an appropriate standard of English competency meaning they can confidently access learning delivered via the multi-modal provision.

We understand that some learners may have a basic level of English competency with a reading age of 10+ years but may still require additional support in order to develop their language skills and academic English. In this case, reasonable adjustments will be made so that the learner is helped to access their curriculum.

An EAL learner will initially be supported through individual assessment by the SEND department, which may lead to appropriate interventions by specialist colleagues and/or the English teaching team. RBAir has a qualified Level 7 assessor in the SEND team who is qualified to complete in person psychometric testing using the appropriate assessment tool which can give further insight into the specific learning needs of a learner.

RBAir recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will make reasonable adjustments, where appropriate, to support learners with EAL and any co-occurring special educational needs or disabilities.

RBAir recognises that all teachers are teachers of EAL learners and share responsibility for supporting language development across the curriculum. Teachers will be supported by the SENDCo to adapt their teaching by using accessible language and vocabulary and simplified phrasing, making vocabulary acquisition (general and subject-specific) an explicit and context-based activity during learning sessions, and modelling clear English communication.

There are many additional tools teachers can use, such as word banks, writing frames, using visual cues and supports, and in most cases, these will be used by teachers to support the language and knowledge development of all learners not just those with EAL.

5. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of support for learners with English as an Additional Language will be monitored through:

- learner progress and attainment

- attendance and engagement
- learner and family feedback
- review of support strategies and interventions

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SENDCo and approved by the RBET Trustees.