



SIAL.school
Bilingual English/Italian

Language Development Policy

Code of Practice for English (EAL) and Italian (IAL) as an Additional Language (EYFS, KS1 & KS2)

Last reviewed: May 2025

To be reviewed: May 2026

Introduction

Children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) are those whose first/home language is not English and who are learning English through the curriculum and broader school life. Similarly, children with Italian as an Additional Language (IAL) have a first/home language other than Italian.

As a bilingual, bi-curricular, and bicultural school, SIAL is committed to meeting the needs of all children learning English and/or Italian as an additional language.

While EAL and IAL are not considered Special Educational Needs (SEN), we recognise that these learners may experience barriers to accessing language and learning, potentially leading to underachievement or isolation.

A subset of these learners are International New Arrivals (INA) – children who have entered the UK within the last three years.

We also consider generational context:

- **First-generation:** Born abroad, now residing in the UK.
 - **Second/third-generation:** Born in the UK into migrant or dual-heritage families.
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Context

Most SIAL students are first-generation Italian EAL learners, with several INA children admitted each year. Educational backgrounds among these students vary significantly in length, style, and focus.

Typically, it takes 5–7 years to achieve academic fluency in an additional language. This is best achieved through immersive, nurturing environments rather than segregated interventions.

Principles

At SIAL, language acquisition in English and Italian is vital for academic success, social inclusion, and future opportunity. Our key principles include:

- Full access to the curriculum for all EAL/IAL learners
- Active removal of barriers to learning
- Providing safe, inclusive, and welcoming environments
- Recognition that:
 - EAL/IAL is a temporary, distinct additional need
 - EAL/IAL learners are not inherently SEN or of lower ability
 - Social, emotional, and cultural dimensions play a critical role

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff share responsibility for identifying and removing barriers to success for EAL/IAL learners. Every teacher is expected to:

- Develop language skills alongside subject content
- Teach metacognitive strategies to bridge prior learning gaps
- Foster inclusive peer relationships

In EYFS, language-related Early Learning Goals are assessed in English, while others can be assessed in any language. Home language use is recognised and valued.

The Key Stage Coordinator oversees EAL/IAL provision, including:

- Identifying new EAL/IAL students
- Communicating individual needs to staff
- Ensuring integration into mainstream classes
- Maintaining the EAL/IAL register

Teaching Assistants (TAs) play a vital role in this provision. They support EAL/IAL learners in the classroom and during small-group interventions, particularly in phonics and structured language development.

Phonics Instruction and Fresh Start

Key Stage 1: Read Write Inc. SIAL implements Read Write Inc. Phonics across EYFS and Key Stage 1. This systematic programme teaches:

- Sound-letter correspondence
- Decoding for reading
- Encoding for writing
- Oral blending and segmentation

TAs are deployed to deliver small-group and one-to-one support during Read Write Inc. sessions, enabling targeted instruction that accelerates language acquisition.

Key Stage 2: Fresh Start Children in KS2 with limited English proficiency follow the Fresh Start programme, an age-appropriate synthetic phonics intervention. It supports language development through:

- Rebuilding foundational phonics skills
- Enhancing vocabulary and reading fluency
- Promoting comprehension and confidence

Both programmes contribute significantly to language development by making the curriculum accessible, building learner confidence, and promoting active use of English.

Approach to Teaching

All teachers will encounter EAL/IAL learners with diverse educational backgrounds. Success requires:

- Accurate pronunciation of students' names
- Strategic grouping with fluent peers
- Buddy systems with trained student mentors
- Use of visual aids and key word translations
- Lesson planning that incorporates general and subject-specific language development

5 Trigger Questions for Teachers:

1. Where are your EAL/IAL children sitting and with whom?
 2. How language-heavy is your task explanation?
 3. How often do these children contribute in class?
 4. How do you respond to language errors?
 5. Have you identified and explicitly taught key subject vocabulary?
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Placement

EAL/IAL learners:

- Have the right to a full timetable
- Should be grouped with fluent language models
- Are placed according to cognitive ability, not language level
- Are not automatically grouped with SEN learners
- Are not assessed via a single test

INA students receive emotionally supportive placement for their first 6–12 months.

Admissions, Identification and Tracking

Upon entry, parent/carers information and school records are used to identify EAL/IAL students.

- Key details are recorded in the class and Learning Support registers
- INA students follow the relevant Code of Practice

- Language proficiency is graded using NASSEA and internal frameworks

Monitoring Process:

1. Create and maintain EAL/IAL register
2. Identify 'Cause for Concern' learners
3. Place on Progression Map and set support strategies

Progress is tracked through whole-school systems and additional monitoring by the LSC.

Where achievement is affected, target-led interventions are implemented in collaboration with class teachers and language specialists.

SEND and Gifted Learners

Most EAL/IAL learners do not have SEN. If SEN is identified, appropriate provision is made in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

Gifted EAL/IAL learners are also identified and supported, regardless of fluency.

Professional Development

Staff development is supported through:

- Regular reflection and discussion
 - Sharing best practice
 - Internal and external CPD opportunities
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Evaluating Impact

The success of EAL/IAL provision is evaluated using:

- Assessment data across subjects
- Phonics programme outcomes (Read Write Inc. / Fresh Start)
- Observational and anecdotal feedback
- Pupil progress meetings
- Social-emotional indicators

Indicators of positive impact:

- Increased curriculum mastery
- Improved language confidence and accuracy
- Enhanced classroom participation
- Stronger peer relationships
- Greater learner independence

Regular analysis of this data informs future planning, target setting, and provision adjustments to ensure every learner achieves their full potential.

Appendix: Language Acquisition Stages**Stage 1: Pre-production (Silent Period)**

- Receptive vocabulary: ~500 words
- Echoes language without confident production
- Approx. N3|8 to N4|8 attainment

Stage 2: Early Production

- Vocabulary: ~1000 words
- Basic expression and response
- Approx. N4|8 to R|8 attainment

Stage 3: Speech Emergence

- Vocabulary: ~3000 words
- Simple sentences used
- Approx. Y1|8 to Y2|8 attainment

Stage 4: Intermediate Fluency

- Vocabulary: ~6000 words
- Effective classroom participation
- Approx. Y4|8 to Y5|8 attainment

Stage 5: Advanced Fluency

- Takes 7–10 years to develop
 - Full participation and comprehension
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Appendix: 6 Steps to Language Learning

1. See the word/phrase
2. Hear the word/phrase
3. Link to meaning
4. Practise and self-repair
5. Revise
6. Apply in context