



## **English as an Additional Language (EAL) Academic Support and Welfare Provision**

**Reviewer:** Helen Davies

**Approver:** Mary Plint

**Reviewed:** June 2025

**Next Review:** June 2026

For the purposes of clarity the following terms will be used throughout the policy:-

'Cheltenham College' refers to Cheltenham College Senior School and Cheltenham College Prep School (including Cheltenham College Nursery School)

'College' refers to Cheltenham College Senior School

'Cheltenham Prep' refers to Cheltenham College Prep School

### **Introduction**

Each year Cheltenham College admits some pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL). Cheltenham College aspires to ensure that all EAL pupils are integrated fully into the College community. They experience an immersion technique through which they acquire English through their academic studies and through their social interaction with UK students, students of other nationalities and teachers in the classroom, in the boarding houses, on the sports pitch and in all of their everyday activities. Pastoral and academic staff all have a responsibility for supporting EAL students at Cheltenham College. There is an English as an Additional Language department with two members of staff available for further academic guidance and support, and the Director of Internationalism and Culture, who can be of further help with pastoral care.

### **Admission to Cheltenham College**

Prospective pupils who do not have English as their first language may apply for a place at the school in the usual manner. Their assessment will include an online proficiency test and a written test of English language; this would either be the College paper with CAT4 and Oxford Placement Test, or the UKISET, which includes the Cambridge Placement Test. All forms of entry will be marked by the Head of EAL to check that students meet College's language requirements. In the event that they visit the College, they may engage in an informal interview with the Head of EAL, or another appropriate member of staff. Alternatively, an interview may take place via Skype, if appropriate. The results of these English language tests may be added to those for other subjects, whether or not for Common Entrance, to determine whether the pupil would be able to cope with studying in a second language and thus, may be offered a place to study at College. Whilst every applicant is treated as an individual, we generally look for a minimum of a A2 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) for Third Form entry; B2 for Fourth Form entry; and B2 for Lower Sixth. Alongside this, pupils must complete a written paper and take the CAT4 test.

EAL pupils who are admitted to College will be able to receive specialist help to enable them to access the mainstream curriculum. In addition, pupils may be prepared for English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) exams, where appropriate, such as the Cambridge English Language Assessment examinations and IELTS. The fee for entering these examinations is charged to the end-of-term bill.

During new pupils' early EAL lessons, further assessment, both overt and discreet, takes place. Subject teachers, tutors and House staff also monitor these pupils both in House and in the mainstream classroom. The Head of EAL may also carry out "shadowing" of new EAL pupils in order to better ascertain their English language needs in the mainstream classroom. Evidence of need for language support will lead to the drawing up of an EAL Learning Needs plan and to the pupil receiving group and/or individual EAL lessons.

### **Link with Cheltenham Prep**

College enjoys close links with the EAL staff at Cheltenham Prep. Staff share good practice, resources and give advice both ways, in order to provide the best possible service for the pupils across both schools. Staff meet regularly to synchronise the admissions process, and share information about pupils moving up to College, in order to ease in the prospective pupil as seamlessly as possible. When a pupil is coming to College from the Prep school, staff will discuss and assess the level of support required for the pupil, based on their individual learning needs.

### **Pastoral and Social Welfare**

In addition to receiving support for their language needs in the form of group and/or individual lessons, College aims to ensure that all EAL pupils feel included in the school community and cared for pastorally. All pupils at Cheltenham College have a Housemaster or Housemistress and Tutor who are responsible for their academic, pastoral and social welfare. The Head of EAL, other EAL teachers and the Tutor in charge of International Students are additional points of contact for pupils for whom English is not the first language. Every House has a Peer Mentor who is friendly and approachable to international students. Peer Mentors take special interest in international pupils and help with queries they may have. College therapists are available and offer confidential and professional support to any pupil. This service is free of charge up to a threshold; there is usually a charge for longer-term counselling and parents are consulted in such instances. College aims to ensure that all pupils, international or UK-based, will feel there is always someone they can turn to however small a perceived problem.

### **Induction Course**

All EAL pupils are strongly encouraged to attend the International Induction, which takes place in the days immediately prior to the start of the Autumn Term. Parents/guardians are usually invited to an informal buffet meal that offers the opportunity to meet key staff. Library, ICT and inductions on English education are included in the course. In addition, students are taken on outings, and evening activities are organised to encourage social interaction. The new pupils are familiarised with College, its buildings, its timetable and its traditions, in a sheltered environment. Sessions are offered on linguistic issues such as coping with unknown vocabulary, note-taking and study skills, in preparation for the academic demands of the curriculum.

## **The Academic Year**

Lower College pupils (Third, Fourth and Fifth Form) for whom English is an additional language and who are deemed to need support, have EAL lessons in year groups, normally when their peers are learning French, although on occasion this could be in place of another Modern Foreign Language. Third Form pupils receive three lessons and Fourth and Fifth Form pupils receive four lessons per week.

Lower Sixth Form pupils may follow an EAL course, which leads to taking the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) examination in May or June, at a suitable examination centre. This examination is an internationally accepted university entrance qualification. The IELTS examination tests academic skills in listening, reading, writing and speaking. The examination is designed to grade pupils' level of English at a level of 1.0 – 9.0. The grade needed depends on the individual university or course but most require an overall score of 6.5 – 7.5.

Any EAL or International student with a GCSE English Language Level 6 or above (previously equivalent to Grade B or above) is not expected to attend IELTS preparation lessons, although it is still recommended in some cases for highly competitive courses. The Head of EAL is able to advise. Pupils attaining Level 5 or below are expected to attend IELTS preparation lessons with a view to take the exam in the summer term of Lower Sixth Form; this includes any Lower Sixth Form pupil who has not taken GCSEs. The Lower Sixth EAL course also addresses skills that are important for study in higher education. The pupils receive one reading and writing lesson and one speaking and listening lesson per week. There is a termly charge for the IELTS preparation course. Please see the schedule at the end of this document.

## **One-to-one Lessons**

In addition to group lessons, pupils may receive one-to-one lessons and/or small group lessons, if a particular need is identified. Each pupil is involved in planning his or her termly programme together with the Head of EAL or EAL teacher, informed by information provided by diagnostic testing and the professional judgement of the teacher. Work is regularly reviewed and together the teacher and pupil make suggestions and set targets for the term ahead. Pupils are committed for a term of one-to-one lessons at a time, so there is a chance for progress to be made and recognised. One-to-one lessons will focus on developing language skills in general, but also on any subject lexis that students find harder. There is a charge for one-to-one and small group tuition. Please see the schedule at the end of this document.

## **Syllabuses**

The focus of lessons in the Third and Fourth Form is on enhancing the four skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. The detail of lessons depends on any group's particular needs, as identified through diagnostic testing. The department aims to support EAL pupils' learning, not only in terms of language, but also of what the pupils are covering in other subjects, particularly to help with cultural context and subject vocabulary. Therefore, there is a strong cross-curricular aspect to lessons. Other lessons may be focussed on areas of grammar still needing more practice. The Fifth Form pupils, once again, follow lessons focusing on further developing the four skill areas and on perfecting more complex areas of grammar and

improving written expression. The EAL department also keeps abreast of what is being studied in the mainstream English department so that further support can be given in EAL lessons where necessary. Time is also put aside to give extra focus to supervised revision for upcoming exams, as well as to look at ongoing coursework whilst keeping in mind the strict rules regarding coursework support / assistance.

The Sixth Form IELTS syllabus focuses on developing the skills required for the IELTS examination such as listening for detail, reading academic texts and writing academic essays with balance, justification of points made and successful structure. There is much exam practice offered, ensuring that the pupils are adequately prepared for the examination.

## **Examinations**

Together with the College Examinations Officer, the Head of EAL makes decisions about whether pupils are eligible for bilingual dictionary use, using rules laid down by the Joint Council for Qualifications. Bilingual dictionary usage is not allowed in Modern Foreign Language, English Language and English Literature GCSE, A-level or English language proficiency examinations.

As entrants have demonstrated reasonable proficiency in using English for entry to College, they are not eligible for extra time in public examinations on the basis of English being an additional language. Only a pupil who has an identified specific learning difficulty in his/her own language may be considered for eligibility for extra time. Entrants who have an identified specific learning difficulty should disclose this prior to entry and further assessment would usually be required. For further details, parents are invited to contact the Deputy Head Learning and Wellbeing: [m.plint@cheltenhamcollege.org](mailto:m.plint@cheltenhamcollege.org)

## **Records**

Records are kept of both class lessons and individual lessons. A student who has one-to-one lessons takes part in the process of designing a personal programme for the term, depending on his/her needs. A pupil's school database record advises teaching staff of the pupil's perceived language proficiency levels, their needs in the mainstream classroom and the support they are receiving. The database is updated regularly. The EAL section of the staff server also contains useful information for members of the teaching staff regarding practical techniques for supporting EAL pupils in the classroom.

## **Conclusion**

We are dedicated to internationalism at Cheltenham College and want to do all that we can to ensure that each pupil achieves their full potential both academically and socially. It is our belief that the English language support offered at Cheltenham College will maximise the chance of this.

<b>Schedule of charges for EAL lessons, per term</b>		
<b>Level 1</b>	1 shared lesson	£275 excluding VAT
<b>Level 2</b>	1 individual lesson	£505 excluding VAT