



Leigh Academy  
**RAINHAM**

# Leigh Academy Rainham

## Whole School Language Policy

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## 1. Philosophy and IB commitment

As an IB school, Leigh Academy Rainham (LAR) recognizes that language is integral to "the education of the whole person". We promote personal and intellectual growth through the exploration of cultural identity and aim to equip our students with the linguistic skills, confidence, and intercultural competencies needed to succeed in our globalized world.

The school's curriculum is designed to support the principles essential for the IB Diploma Programme and the Career-related Programme (IBCP). We are rooted in the awareness that language skills are tightly linked to cognitive growth, since they are the means by which meaning and knowledge are negotiated, constructed, and shared.

In recognizing that language is central to learning, the Academy acknowledges that all teachers are, in practice, teachers of language, with responsibilities in facilitating communication. We are committed to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive environment that values linguistic diversity and cultural richness.

### **The Academy's commitment to language development strives to:**

- Promote consistency of practice in the teaching and learning of language.
- Develop and inter-relate the skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and media literacy.
- Develop and promote cultural awareness and understanding.
- Establish a unified, whole-school approach to language education.
- Ensure that all students have equitable access to the curriculum and achieve their full potential.

## 2. Post-16 requirements and definitions

The overall language development strategy at LAR provides a robust foundation for entry into the demanding language requirements of the post-16 IB programmes, specifically addressing both Language & Literature and the required Language development components of the IBCP Core.

### 2.1 English Language and Literacy

English is the language of instruction and is recognized as central to accessing the curriculum and participating in school life. Instruction promotes high standards of literacy and oracy across the curriculum. The emphasis is on developing the students' ability to convey complex ideas effectively in speech and writing, covering composition, grammar, punctuation, and reading comprehension.

### 2.2 Modern Foreign Languages - MFL (French and Spanish)

LAR is committed to offering a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes a modern foreign language, fostering linguistic curiosity. MFL instruction is progressive, focusing on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, alongside intercultural awareness and competence.

### 2.3 Post-16 Course Requirements (IBDP and IBCP)

LAR will provide stimulating opportunities for language learning as set out in the language element of the IBCP. Students who have achieved sufficient academic language proficiency will pursue language courses appropriate for the Diploma Programme or Career-related Programme requirements. Exceptions to standard requirements may be made for EAL students who require additional English support.

### 3. Language provision and home languages

#### 3.1 First Language: English (Language of Instruction)

As the Academy's Language of Instruction, all students are required to achieve competency in meeting academic goals. Students entering the Academy with limited competence in English are given additional initial language support to enable them to learn effectively and confidently in their other subjects as soon as possible. Teachers regularly reference EAL assessment bands to inform planning and differentiation.

#### 3.2 Mother-tongue Instruction or Support in Other First Languages

The Academy actively seeks to support the mother-tongue development of its students. We encourage all EAL learners to study their home language(s) as a GCSE qualification, provided the subject is available. Bilingualism has a positive effect on educational attainment when both languages are developed to an academic level.

- **Linguistic Context:** LAR celebrates the rich linguistic diversity, with 27 languages spoken by students across the school.
- **Encouragement of Use:** We provide opportunities for students to use and develop their home languages in school settings, such as bilingual projects or collaborative tasks.
- **Resources:** Dual-language books are available in the library to encourage literacy development in both English and the home language.

#### 3.3 Language Across the Curriculum

Literacy skills are reinforced across curriculum subjects using a consistent school-wide approach. This is essential for developing the deep subject understanding required for post-16 pathways.

Key Language Across the Curriculum principles include:

- Explicit teaching of tiered vocabulary: everyday (tier 1), general academic (tier 2), and subject-specific (tier 3).
- Use of sentence stems and discussion frames to support academic talk.
- Scaffolding of complex reading texts and writing tasks.
- Incorporating specific language learning goals alongside curriculum objectives in lesson planning.

### 4. EAL provision and curriculum access

Students entering LAR with limited proficiency in English receive appropriate additional support within the curriculum. The policy provides a framework to guide teaching and support practices for EAL students, recognizing the diverse and evolving needs of individual learners.

#### **4.1 Identification and Profiling**

Upon admission, all students identified as having EAL undergo an initial assessment to: Identify their current English language proficiency and Understand their first language skills and prior educational experience.

LAR categorizes EAL learners into five broad groups based on their English proficiency level: New to English, Early Acquisition Learners, Developing Competence in EAL, Competent Users of EAL, and Fluent Users of EAL. Teachers regularly reference these bands to inform differentiation.

#### **4.2 Support Strategies**

EAL provision utilizes targeted, structured evidence-based interventions. To support access to the mainstream curriculum:

- Adapt Instruction by providing materials and tasks that are scaffolded.
- Utilize Visual and Contextual Support such as visual organizers, images, realia, pictorial cues, and multilingual word walls.
- Encourage Collaborative Learning and peer support, including the Young Interpreters Scheme.
- Utilize Language Support Tools such as bilingual dictionaries, dual-language books, translation apps (Google Translate on chromebooks), and subject-specific glossaries.

#### **4.3 Supporting Higher-Achieving EAL Learners (Post-16 Focus)**

Students in the Competent or Fluent EAL bands may still require support with academic language and subject-specific terminology. Targeted support utilizes:

- Extension Activities that challenge critical thinking, creativity, and subject mastery.
- Teaching nuanced and subject-specific vocabulary and language structures.
- Encouraging participation in Enrichment Opportunities and leadership roles.

### **5. Assessment, monitoring and evaluation**

LAR maintains a robust system of assessment and record-keeping to ensure EAL learners are supported effectively and equitably.

#### **5.1 Assessment Practices**

- Tools: The Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework or similar standardized assessments are used to measure proficiency. Where feasible, assessments in the student's first language are conducted to ascertain overall cognitive and academic levels without the interference of language barriers.
- Appropriacy of Testing: Standardized tests are adapted where necessary to ensure fairness and reliability, which may include providing additional time, simplified instructions, or bilingual dictionaries. Teachers carefully consider whether assessments evaluate subject knowledge or are unduly impacted by English proficiency.

## 5.2 Monitoring and Tracking

- Progress is documented in Individual Learning Plans or EAL passports.
- These records are reviewed once every 2-module to ensure timely identification of issues and areas for improvement.
- Assessment outcomes are recorded centrally and used to set targets, plan interventions, and communicate progress.
- The EAL Coordinator, in collaboration with classroom teachers and the SLT, oversees the monitoring of the policy's implementation.

## 6. Language teaching and responsibilities

### 6.1 Whole-School Responsibility

All teachers are responsible for adapting their teaching to meet the needs of EAL students, ensuring lessons are accessible and inclusive. Teachers maintain high expectations for EAL learners' progress, recognizing that cognitive ability is distinct from language proficiency.

Role	Key Responsibility
SLT	Ensures sufficient resources and time are allocated for staff training and development of EAL strategies. Oversees policy implementation.
EAL Coordinator	Oversees policy implementation, monitors effectiveness, and provides regular updates to the SLT. Drafts policy updates.
Subject Leaders	Incorporate EAL support strategies and language objectives into curriculum planning and delivery.
Classroom Teachers	Responsible for adapting teaching to meet EAL needs and regularly referencing EAL assessment bands.

Support Staff	Provide targeted assistance, using best practices to enhance language acquisition and content understanding.
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## 6.2 Staff Development (CPD)

The school delivers regular training sessions for all staff, focusing on effective strategies for supporting EAL learners, including: adaptive teaching techniques, using visuals, modeling, and scaffolding to aid comprehension. Staff performance in implementing EAL strategies is included as part of professional development reviews.

## 7. Parental and community engagement

The school aims to foster a supportive learning environment both at home and in school. We engage families of EAL learners to ensure effective communication.

- **Multilingual Communication:** Key documents and communications are made available in the most common home languages, and interpreters are accessed for meetings and parent-teacher conferences.
- **Dedicated Support:** Specific welcoming sessions are offered for new EAL families to explain school expectations, routines, and educational programs, held in multiple languages where necessary.
- **Liaison Roles:** Six Student Support Managers (two for each college) work directly with parents, offering guidance and support to bridge gaps between the school and families.
- **Cultural Celebrations:** The school celebrates cultural diversity through events such as multicultural days and international food festivals, providing opportunities for parents to share their cultural backgrounds.

## 8. Monitoring, review and policy update

The language policy will be formally reviewed annually. The review process involves the EAL Coordinator, members of the SLT, classroom teachers, and a designated governor or trustee. Crucially, input from EAL students and their families will also be solicited to ensure their voices are reflected in the policy.

Evaluation methods include analysis of student achievement data (English proficiency levels, attainment, and progress reports) and reviewing professional development opportunities and their impact on teaching practices. The evaluation findings will be documented in an annual report presented to the governing body.

This systematic approach ensures that the policy remains a dynamic and responsive framework, supporting the needs of all EAL learners on their journey to full integration and academic success.