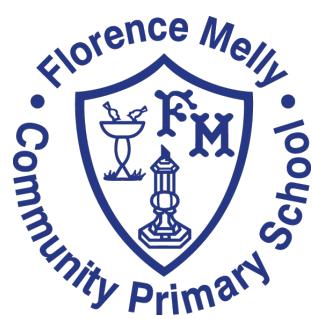


Florence Melly  
Community Primary School

## EAL Assessment Procedures

<b>Policy Title:</b>	EAL Assessment Procedures		<b>Date written:</b>	January 2026
<b>Written by:</b>	Christina O'Keefe (Deputy Headteacher/Inclusion Lead)		<b>New or revised policy:</b>	New
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	February 2026	February 2026	February 2026	





## **EAL Assessment Overview**

**January 2026**

As a school, we use the EAL Assessment Framework and key guidance from the Bell Foundation to support us in tracking and supporting our EAL learners. Our key aims are to:

- Support teachers in planning and embedding effective multilingual pedagogies that promote the learning of pupils who use EAL, following assessment using the Bell Foundation's EAL Assessment Framework for Schools.
- Offer practical classroom techniques and activities aligned with learners' assessed levels of English language proficiency.
- Provide examples of strategies and support models that enhance both curriculum access and the development of English language skills alongside subject learning.
- Signpost relevant resources and tools for teachers to reference and use.

The guidance is organised according to the five assessment bands A–E, following **The Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework for Schools**:

### **Assessment bands**



### **Making Sense of the Bands**

#### **Band A – New to English**

In general, learners working at band A (new to English) require significant support to access curriculum content and may rely more heavily on translation tools, and extra adult and peer support. Band A learners should spend the majority of their time in the mainstream classroom, as this is where most learning takes place and where they will build mixed-language friendship groups, and develop their social English skills through interaction with peers. Since opportunities to use and develop oracy skills are integral throughout the bands, classrooms should be organised to facilitate learners working in groups. Translation apps – particularly those which translate both spoken and written word – are useful at this band, especially if the learner has not yet developed literacy in their home language or uses a different script. Visuals are also crucial to convey meaning, and you will find it useful to build a bank of them to use as you need them. These learners may also receive some time-limited and curriculum-linked out of-class interventions.

## **Band B – Early Acquisition**

At band B (early acquisition), learners are beginning to interact verbally with others in English, and making sense of some written text. Scaffolding still needs to be significant, but it should be slightly reduced in order to keep the learner working at a level which both supports and challenges them. Substitution tables (for both writing and speaking) which use a mixture of visuals and words/phrases to embed curriculum knowledge within key structures, and gap fill exercises which offer a choice of words, are useful here ([bell-foundation.org.uk/scaffolding](http://bell-foundation.org.uk/scaffolding)).

## **Band C – Developing Competence**

A learner working at band C (developing competence) is displaying emerging competence and, especially if they arrived working at band A (new to English), may demonstrate good understanding and appear to be, orally at least, quite fluent. At this band, learners usually no longer receive out-of-class interventions but still require adaptations in class to enable them to progress in both their English language and subject knowledge. Learners benefit from activities to help them build their vocabulary, especially academic and subject-specific words and phrases. Graphic organisers ([bell-foundation.org.uk/graphic-organisers](http://bell-foundation.org.uk/graphic-organisers)) and Directed Activities Related to Text (DARTs) ([bell-foundation.org.uk/darts](http://bell-foundation.org.uk/darts)) will help them organise their thinking and support their reading comprehension and writing skills development. There is a temptation here to move away from using the home language and focus only on English, but the value of all of the languages available to a learner, even at this stage, is significant. As well as being a key part of a learner's identity and sense of self, the home language and other languages the pupils know will also be the medium through which significant prior knowledge has been accumulated, and this needs to be harnessed and built upon (e.g., Baker and Wright, 2017).

## **Band D – Competent**

Learners working at band D (competent) demonstrate increasing accuracy and fluency and are sometimes in danger of losing out on support as they are seen as "coping". Furthermore, especially if they arrived as band A (new to English) learners, they are often beginning to feel quite comfortable using English socially and may regard themselves as no longer in need of support. However, although they appear socially proficient, they may be at risk of not realising their full potential academically if left without any support, especially for understanding figurative and nuanced language, organising ideas effectively in longer texts, and some elements of grammar (Cameron, 2003). The use of graphic organisers ([bell-foundation.org.uk/graphic-organisers](http://bell-foundation.org.uk/graphic-organisers)) to order thoughts and plan paragraphs, the clarification of figurative language and idioms, and attention to features of grammar such as articles and prepositions will help these learners.

## **Band E – Fluent**

Finally, learners working at band E (fluent) can engage fully and independently with curriculum content across the four domains of listening, speaking, reading and viewing, and writing. They may sometimes not understand cultural references (for example, to streamed videos, nursery rhymes or British historical events), particularly if they have arrived recently from abroad. They may also make some errors, such as using the wrong prepositions in phrasal verbs (for example, saying "throw off" when they mean "throw out"), using articles (the, an, a) incorrectly or omitting them, or in more complex structures (for example, writing "If we would have realised earlier we could correct our mistake"). Learners at this band need cultural references explained clearly to them and personalised feedback on their spoken and written production to help them use language even more accurately and appropriately. Strategies such as modelling, accompanied by noticing or awareness-raising ([bell-foundation.org.uk/modelling](http://bell-foundation.org.uk/modelling)) are helpful at this level, both for academic language and genre. For example, before writing an argumentative for and against

piece, provide some examples of WAGOLLS (What A Good One Looks Like), and teach phrases for explaining and justifying points of view, refuting ideas and summing up.

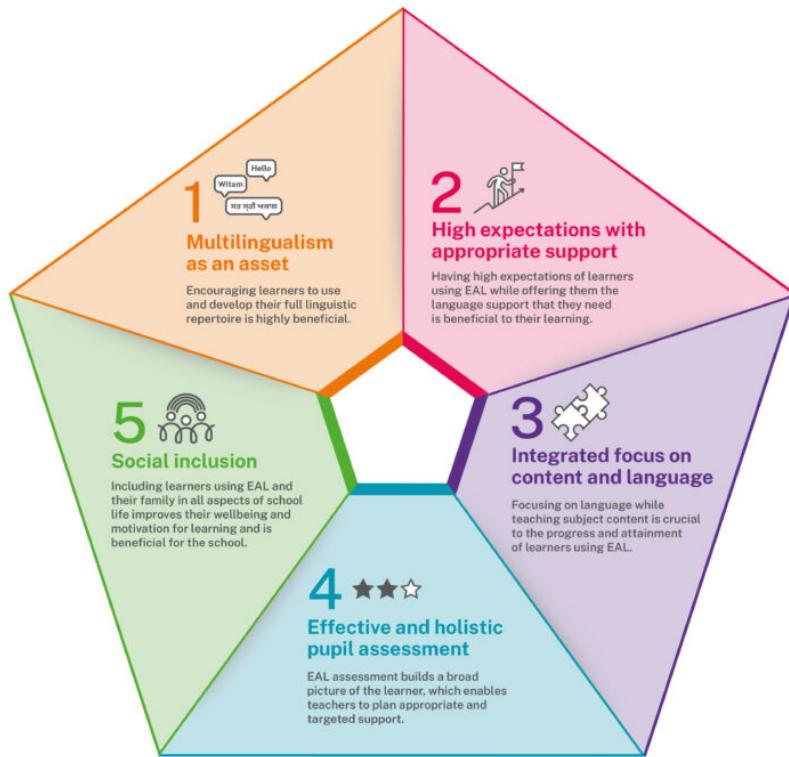
## **The Four Domains of Language Use**

The guidance and strategies are divided into:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading & Viewing
- Writing

## **Five Principles to Guide EAL Pedagogy**

- 1. Multilingualism as an asset** - There is a plethora of research around the crucial role that a learner's home language plays in their emotional and cognitive development. Maintaining and developing the home languages results in greater cognitive flexibility and ultimately stronger academic performance. The guidance and suggestions in this section are included to help you promote multilingualism and develop your thriving and dynamic school/classroom.
- 2. High expectations with appropriate support** - In this section you can find guidance and suggestions to help you avoid the temptation to "dumb down" or simplify the curriculum for EAL learners and instead to amplify it through judicious use of scaffolding. It is vital to bear in mind that the cognitive and academic abilities of learners using EAL are separate from their current ability to use English. Like all learners, those using EAL will benefit from being motivated and challenged in the classroom.
- 3. An integrated focus on language and content** - EAL learners have a double job to do. They must acquire proficiency in English at the same time as learning curriculum content. Therefore it is important to provide them with activities which teach and practise language structures through the medium of curriculum subjects. Decontextualised grammar activities, such as those found in many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks, are not always useful, as their focus tends to be general and not curriculum embedded. The guidance and suggestions in this section can be used as you plan and teach your lessons, to help you integrate your subject content with English language learning, and enable learners to achieve this double goal.
- 4. Effective and holistic assessment** - In order to be effective, assessment needs to be relevant to the learner. Many formal standardised tests designed to assess reading age, verbal reasoning, and reading comprehension in English are designed for pupils for whom English is their first language. As such, they are of limited use for learners using EAL, as they will not, on their own, give an accurate picture of the progress of a learner using EAL. The guidance and suggestions in this section give you some ideas of how to supplement or adapt the assessment process to gain a fuller picture of the learners using EAL in your class.
- 5. Social inclusion** - Learners using EAL need to feel safe and secure, and have a sense of belonging to their school and wider community in order to maximise their opportunities for success. This is especially important for children seeking asylum (McIntyre and Abrams, 2021). It is important to build and promote an inclusive environment where everybody is a valued contributor to school life. The guidance and suggestions in this section are ideas to help you support your learners using EAL to find their own ways to connect, participate, and belong.



## **Holistic Assessment**

Class teachers will assess all EAL pupils termly during planned Assessment Weeks using The Bell Foundation Assessment Framework. Teachers can highlight the ten steps within each band to assess pupils using a best fit approach. Once each learner using EAL has been assessed, then can then refer to the guidance for ideas and suggestions and adapt their practice accordingly. Progress of this will be reviewed termly and monitored by the Inclusion Lead and Curriculum Lead.

## **Resources**

For further advice and guidance, please refer to;

- [Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework](#)
- [Bell Foundation Classroom Guidance & Strategies](#)