

EAL Policy 2023-2024

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Policy Aims and School Vision

The Inspired Philosophy

As part of the Inspired Group, we are also guided by the philosophy of the Inspired group:

- *A child's education is the single most important consideration for any parent or carer*
- *At Inspired, we believe that it is an individual's total educational experience that instils the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and values that they will carry with them for life.*
- *We believe that this set of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and values, instilled by education, will form the basis of how we approach the future.*

Inspired schools believe that these are the foundations on which we build and plan our lives. At King's InterHigh and Academy21, we welcome students with varied plans, including attending university, college, obtaining an apprenticeship, or going into the workplace. Being part of **Inspired** allows us to cater for our rich and varied student community through an inclusive and positive approach that maintains high expectations of all our students with their own aspirations.

Our vision and aims

Both King's InterHigh and Academy 21 welcome students with a variety of prior education experiences and with varied aims. This is fundamental to what we do - our vision is to be a flexible home for all students and so we seek to offer a curriculum and experience that allows students to pursue learning interests, fits around other priorities and gives them the structure needed to work towards their goals. We seek to create the conditions for this – a purposeful learning environment, the ability to focus and challenge oneself and a sense of safety and value for every child.

We have core aims that underpin this vision. They are to:

1. provide a **high quality, positive and inclusive learning experience and environment** that inspires all students to discover, develop and fulfil their potential and make outstanding progress in their learning whatever their starting point.
2. promote **desirable behaviour and a culture of mutual respect and maximum engagement** in learning through our actions and wider culture.
3. **recognise the successes and development of each student**, be it social, emotional, academic, or otherwise, that develops self-esteem, and respect for self and others.

There are some broader themes to our vision that are worth detailing:

Participation: We believe educational success comes from students actively participating in learning through attending live classes or using lessons recordings and resources actively; submitting set work; engaging with their peers or just following feedback to improve. As a school we set conditions for our staff and students to be reflective on their efforts and act with integrity, building a culture of improvement and contribution to community that ultimately makes everyone's impact on the world a positive one.

Holistic development: In a rapidly evolving digital world, we take seriously the holistic development of our students and aim to equip students with the tools and attitudes to navigate technology and global relationships positively. We have robust actions in place to keep school free from more negative instances that might occur in other settings such as bullying or disruption.

Inclusivity and flexibility: We are inclusive, and we want every child, regardless of additional needs, to be the best version of themselves through the support of our flexible schooling and adaptive teaching.

Purpose

According to the Department for Education, speakers of English as an Additional Language (EAL) are defined as ‘*anyone who has been exposed to a language other than English during early childhood and continues to be exposed to this language in the home or in the community.*’ At King’s InterHigh/Academy 21, many of our students fall into this category and hence are classed as EAL students. Students with EAL may be born in the UK, but in a family where the main language is not solely English. Many of the EAL students at the school have been brought up as bilingual by their parents or count English as their first language whilst being fluent or semi-fluent in another family language. In addition, many of our students at the school have previously been instructed in a language other than English. As a result, in addition to EAL lessons, students require necessary adaptations made to the delivery of the content curriculum in order for it to be comprehensible and to ensure they make necessary progress in all areas of the curriculum.

Due to the nature of online education, Inspired Online Schools are not limited by geographical location and thus proudly cater for a large and diverse community of students from all around the world. Due to being UK curriculum schools, English is the language of instruction; however, students are supported at every level of proficiency if English is not their first language.

Information about students with English as an additional language (EAL) is gathered as part of the admissions process and students are added to the EAL Register to flag that they may need support. Reading baseline tests and other measures help to establish the level of support required. In class, EAL students are supported through both specific, quality-first teaching strategies and assistive technology such as the use of closed captioning in the classroom environment.

If students require a more intensive and formal curriculum of EAL support, families can purchase an EAL course taught by a specialist member of the teaching staff as part of the suite of additional services described below.

Aims

Our main aim is for all EAL students to become confident in listening, speaking, reading and writing so that they are able to access the academic curriculum and communicate effectively within an academic setting. More specifically, the delivery of EAL at King’s InterHigh/Academy 21 aims to allow all students to:

- develop all four skill areas: reading, writing, speaking and listening
- develop the language skills required for academic study
- reach an appropriate level of English proficiency to meet the linguistic demands of A-Level or (International) GCSE study
- develop an appreciation and understanding of the way the English language works both systemically and functionally
- acquire the necessary academic vocabulary required to achieve success in a range of academic subject areas
- be prepared to sit English language exams where appropriate;
- be linguistically competent in English to participate fully in all areas of school life: academic, social, cultural and spiritual

This is achieved through specialist teaching across the curriculum, adapted by subject teachers to meet the needs of EAL learners, enabling students to acquire the academic language needed within their subject areas. Teachers receive specific training in how to adapt their teaching, specifically in relation to the teaching of academic vocabulary and the development of oracy, which is supported by the SEN Team.

Key Principles

a. Language Competency

In the teaching of EAL within schools, there is a clear distinction between a student's Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS), seen as the conversational fluency in a language and their Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). This concept was first introduced by Cummins (1981) and refers to students' ability to understand and express concepts and ideas in both oral and written modes that are relevant to success in school.

Attention has been drawn to the timelines and challenges second language learners encounter as they attempt to catch up with their peers in academic aspects of school language. It has been demonstrated that oral proficiency in a language can take three to five years to develop, whereas academic proficiency can take from four to seven years. To improve the language proficiency of students with a significantly lower level of English, additional one to one instruction may also need to be provided.

b. Whole-School Approach to Language Development

At King's InterHigh/Academy 21, we believe that all staff have a role to play in the language development of the EAL students; it is not simply the responsibility of the Inclusion/SEN? Team or English department to teach English. Subject teachers, pastoral staff and support staff must all recognise the potential of their interactions with EAL students in terms of helping the EAL students to make progress in the English competency. The SEN Team will facilitate training and develop all staff's awareness of their role and how they might engage with EAL students to promote oracy. Reflect Tutors and other pastoral staff have a specific role in ensuring that EAL students are encouraged to participate fully in the spiritual, social and cultural life of the school community.

c. Links Between Proficiency at English and Enriched Experience at School

For EAL students to thrive, they must have the linguistic competency to access all aspects of their time at King's InterHigh/Academy 21. This includes access to the curriculum, the co-curricular programme and social activities as well as access to Form Time, Circle Time and opportunities to compete with others for example in House Competitions.

d. The Value of Multilingualism

Many languages coexist at King's InterHigh/Academy 21 and all are valued equally and are celebrated at the school. Students who have a solid foundation in their mother tongue develop stronger literacy abilities in English. Research is also very clear about the importance of multilingual students' mother tongue for their overall personal and educational development, as well as maintaining their ability to communicate with friends and family at home.

e. English and Mother Tongue Use

English is the language of instruction at King's InterHigh/Academy 21. While multilingualism and mother-tongue languages are highly valued, English is our primary language of communication and instruction and we are committed to providing a high standard of communicating, teaching and learning in English. In the classroom, students are expected to communicate in English, while encouraged to seek support from dictionaries and other students of the same language; they are allowed to explain something to other students in their own language during lessons should the need arise.

Outside of class, students may choose to speak in their mother tongue in their leisure time. We promote intercultural respect and understanding by encouraging students to choose a language that includes whoever is present in the group, which can change moment by moment.

Assessment of English

a. Admissions Information

King's InterHigh/Academy 21 requires young people joining the school to have a grasp of the English language expected for their age. Where young people have English as an additional language, parents must ensure that their child has a good level of English to access the curriculum. It is likely to be disadvantageous for a young person to join the school with an insufficient level of English to access the curriculum. Families are required to comment and provide information about their child's English language proficiency at the Admissions stage.

As a reference point rather than any form of compulsory requirement upon entry, our definition of age-appropriate proficiency in the English language would be:

- for students entering Years 3-6, evidence that they are working at CEFR Level A2 – we would target them to reach level B1 by the time they start Key Stage 3.
- students entering Years 7-11, evidence that they are working at CEFR Level B1 – we would target them to reach level B2+ by the time they start Key Stage 4 and 5 respectively

According to the official [CEFR guidelines](#), someone at the B1 level in English:

- Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.
- Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling
- Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest
- Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans

This [quick test](#) may help to determine if your child is meeting the B1 level in English.

By the end of Year 9, young people should be able to communicate in English at a B2 level. This will allow meaningful interaction and contributions to exam-level qualifications.

A young person at a B2 level can communicate easily and spontaneously in a clear and detailed manner. This is not yet an experienced speaker, but a B2 user is able to understand and be understood in most situations. According to the official CEFR guidelines, someone at the B2 level in English:

- Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her/their field of specialisation
- Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party
- Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options

This [quick test](#) may help to determine if your child is meeting the B2 level in English.

Although not currently a requirement to join the school, prospective parents are encouraged to explore the option of their child or young person completing the CEFR-related English assessments:

- [B1 Preliminary assessment for schools](#) (Cambridge)
- [B2 First assessment for schools](#) (Cambridge)

We fully acknowledge that other providers of English language proficiency assessments are also available. King's InterHigh/Academy 21 has no partnership with and does not endorse the Cambridge assessments.

EAL Support classes follow the internationally recognised Cambridge English Language Assessment curriculum.

b. Monitoring and Support

students are monitored continually throughout the year through a mix of formative and summative assessment. Initial Admissions data, identifying a student's linguistic background and competence in other languages, students' previous educational and schooling experience and their family and biographical background are also provided to all teachers.

Teachers and staff are encouraged to refer students for EAL support where they believe the students would benefit from this. Our school now has an EAL provision in place that students who require EAL support can sign up to. An additional fee exists for these classes.

Staffing

King's InterHigh/Academy 21 has members of staff who are qualified in EAL, for example, those who possess CELTA, degree-level and post-graduate qualifications in this area. Our SEND Hub teachers, working in our additional English language support classes are qualified and experienced in working with and supporting EAL students.

In terms of ongoing professional development, teachers are encouraged to develop their teaching and to keep abreast of changes and developments in the field of English language teaching. The SEN Team, Heads of School, and other teachers, facilitate CPD sessions on language awareness and the teaching of EAL students.

Subject Teacher Support

There is an expectation of all subject teachers within the School to adapt their lessons accordingly to the needs of EAL students. This includes using a variety of teaching strategies and techniques, and as a minimum all teachers are expected to:

- provide word lists and glossaries for all students at the start of a lesson/unit of work
- model and scaffold written answers in class by deconstructing sample answers showing how to plan, organise ideas and check work
- provide a language-rich environment within their classrooms with keyword and visual displays to aid students' acquisition and comprehension of content vocabulary
- correct students' written and spoken English with an emphasis on the accurate use of formal written academic English including spelling, punctuation and grammar
- highlight and make explicit the academic and subject specific vocabulary within their subjects, reinforcing the acquisition of vocabulary regularly
- encourage oracy within the classroom through the use of a range of strategies in order to give students maximum opportunities to practise and use the target language, including think, pair, share activities, for example
- grade and reduce the amount of 'teacher-talk' within lessons by giving clear, simple instructions one at a time, ensuring input is comprehensible to all students
- check students' understanding of instructions and concepts through targeted questioning
- seek guidance from the SEN Team on specific strategies to employ, when needed
- anticipate and pre-teach vocabulary which students may not be able to access, when necessary

EAL students may use bilingual dictionaries in GCSE examinations (except English, Geography, History, MFL and RS examinations) if:

- a) their first language is not English
- b) it reflects the student's normal way of working

EAL students may use a bilingual dictionary and be awarded 10% extra time in GCSE examinations if they entered the UK less than three years before the time of the examination with no prior knowledge of English.

The majority of students who study at King's InterHigh/Academy 21 have EAL learning needs which are ordinarily met by the EAL lessons and the modifications to the curriculum as adopted by all subject teachers at the school. In addition, the progress of students' English is monitored carefully and additional support is provided where needed.

Students are also encouraged to become independent and autonomous learners of English and are given the skills necessary to be self-directed through access to online and other support material provided by the department. There may be some students whose English language needs are greater than most of the students in their classes, and in order to access the curriculum may need additional support. In these cases, a referral for support can be made by the class teacher, and support options, such as our EAL classes through our SEN Services Hub, will be explored with the students and their family.

Promoting Social Integration

Teachers will develop opportunities in the classes and extracurricular sessions to build EAL learners' confidence by fully participating in all areas of the classroom-based discussions, helping the EAL learners to develop their own voices and the value of their potential contribution at King's InterHigh/Academy 21. It can be challenging for students who are not yet confident in their spoken English to participate fully in the activities, especially when it involves participating in activities where the majority of students are native speakers of English.

It is the role of the class teacher and pastoral staff to encourage EAL students to find an activity that helps them integrate with students from outside their own friendship group. Participation needs careful monitoring and following up to see if there are any ways to help the students make the most of their extracurricular experiences.

Promoting Cultural Awareness

International students are given opportunities to celebrate their linguistic and cultural heritage in all aspects of their life at School. Examples of how these might be celebrated:

- encourage all staff to pronounce the names of students correctly
- publish 'students Profiles' in their mother tongue on class pages
- use virtual display spaces to showcase students' cultural heritage
- encourage opportunities for students to teach one another different languages
- celebrate world festivals and national days
- share stories from different cultures in English and Drama
- organise multicultural events
- share music from around the world
- enable 'cultural values conversations' – e.g. in tutorials have a discussion with someone from another culture about their cultural values related to various cultural variables like time, gestures, appearance, and how they view the elderly
- in the curriculum, use case studies and research about different cultures
- organise 'A Taste of...' events, celebrating food and music from different cultures

Appendix 1 – CEFR Levels

It is desirable that the common reference points are presented in different ways for different purposes. For some purposes it will however be appropriate to summarise the set of proposed Common Reference Levels in a holistic summarized table. Such a simple 'global' representation will make it easier to communicate the system to non-specialist users and will provide teachers and curriculum planners with orientation points.

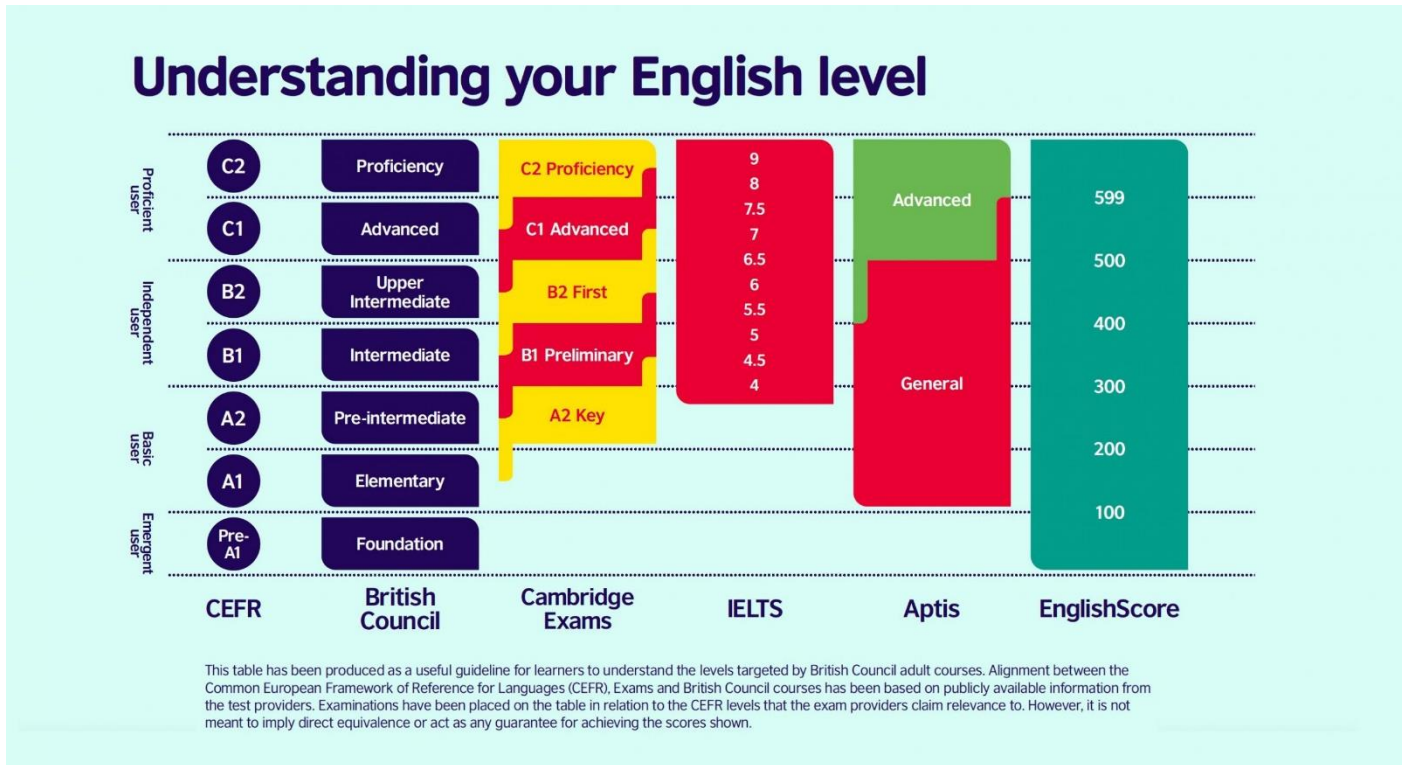
The following levels have associated descriptions about the level of proficiency of an individual at each level.

PROFICIENT USER	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
INDEPENDENT USER	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
BASIC USER	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

[Please also see official translations of the CEFR Global Scale using this link.](#)

Appendix 2 – CEFR Levels Comparison to Different Exams

The British Council has produced a useful table for learners to understand the levels of British Council courses, the CEFR levels and different exams.



Source: British Council – [Understanding Your English Level](#)