



Burpham Preschool: English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy

At Burpham Preschool, we value and celebrate the linguistic and cultural diversity of all our children and families. We recognize that children learning English as an additional language (EAL) require support to develop confidence and competence in English whilst maintaining and valuing their home language.

We are committed to providing an inclusive, welcoming and supportive environment where every child can thrive socially, emotionally and academically.

We recognise that most EAL pupils needing additional support do not have SEN needs. However, should SEN needs be identified, EAL pupils will continue to have equal access to the nursery provision and be supported by the preschool's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo). Similarly, we recognise that there may be EAL pupils who are gifted or talented even though they may not be fluent in English.

Definitions

EAL stands for English as an Additional Language and recognises the fact that many children learning English in educational establishments in this country already know one or more other languages and are adding English to that repertoire.

Bilingual is used to refer to those children who have access to more than one language at home and at school. It does not necessarily imply full fluency in both or all of their languages.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- Ensure all children feel valued, included and respected regardless of their first language.
- Support children in developing spoken and understood English.
- Encourage children to maintain and develop their home language.
- Promote equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum.
- Work collaboratively with parents/carers and external agencies where appropriate.
- Foster positive attitudes towards cultural and linguistic diversity.

Principles

At Burpham Preschool, we believe that:

- A child's home language is a vital part of their identity and should be respected and encouraged.
- Children learning EAL can acquire English successfully through meaningful interaction and play-based learning.
- Bilingualism and multilingualism are strengths and should be celebrated.
- Children may go through a "silent period" when learning English which is a normal part of language development. During this time, the child is absorbing what they are learning and building on their understanding all in preparation for when they feel ready to move to the next stage of speaking.
- Effective communication with families is essential to supporting children's learning and wellbeing.

Identification and Assessment

When a child joins the setting:

- Information about languages spoken at home will be gathered during registration and induction.
- Staff will work with parents/carers to understand the child's language background, interests and communication needs. Parents are asked to share a simple list of commonly used words in their home language that can be used in preschool to support their child during the settling in period.
- Children's progress in communication and language development will be observed and monitored regularly.
- Assessments will take into account the child's development in both their home language and English where possible.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

Staff will support children learning EAL through a number of strategies:

- Using visual aids, gestures, signs, objects and demonstrations.
- Providing a language-rich environment with clear routines and repetition.
- Modelling correct language in meaningful contexts.
- Encouraging participation through play, songs, stories and group activities.
- Using simple, clear language while maintaining appropriate expectations.

- Valuing and including children's home languages within the setting.
- Providing books, labels, songs and resources that reflect diverse languages and cultures.

Partnership with Parents/Carers

We recognize that parents/carers as children's first educators and aim to:

- Build positive relationships with families.
- Encourage parents to continue speaking and developing their home language.
- Share information about the child's progress and wellbeing.
- Use translated materials where possible and appropriate.
- Invite families to share cultural traditions, stories, songs and celebrations.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

The setting is committed to equality and inclusion. We will:

- Ensure all children have equal access to learning opportunities and activities.
- Challenge all discrimination and prejudice.
- Promote positive images of different cultures, languages and family backgrounds.
- Ensure resources and displays reflect diversity and inclusion.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for:

- Creating an inclusive environment for children learning EAL.
- Supporting children's communication and language development.
- Monitoring children's progress and wellbeing.
- Working in partnership with families and professionals.
- Undertaking relevant training and professional development where appropriate to ensure they are able to support EAL children effectively.

The preschool leadership team are responsible for:

- Supporting staff with strategies and resources.
- Co-ordinating support for children with EAL needs.
- Liaising with external professionals where necessary.

- Monitoring the effectiveness of EAL provision.

Reviewed: May 2026

Next Review: May 2027