

Blairdardie English as an Additional Language Strategy



Updated October 2025.

Introduction

Scotland's education system is designed to be inclusive for all children and young people, with or without additional support needs. An increasing number of Newly Arrived families are arriving in our schools where English is an Additional Language (EAL) to their first language, and it is crucial that schools ensure that these children are immersed and included in a positive school experience that recognises and celebrates their language and culture, while also providing support in accessing the English-speaking curriculum.

EAL Strategy

1. When a new EAL pupil is registered at the school, a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will meet with the family, with an interpreter if appropriate, to complete an EAL enrolment form to capture further details about home languages, country of origin and other relevant information.
2. The EAL pupil is buddied up with a Young Interpreter(s) by the EAL Champion who will introduce the new learner to school routines, rules and help them to feel welcome in the school.
3. Following 3-4 weeks of immersion in the classroom, an English Language Level (ELL) assessment can take place. The learner is asked questions to further populate the pupil profile and is assessed on their talking and listening, reading and writing skills in English. A pupil competence profile is completed, and an ELL is determined using this evidence - this information is populated onto the master EAL data document and the office staff emailed to update SEEMIS. The class teacher is also informed. This is completed by a member of SLT or the EAL champion. The EAL pupil competency profile is updated regularly during tracking meetings.
4. Following on from the English Language Level assessment, the EAL champion will create an EAL pupil profile which contains key information for relevant staff including details about home language use, overall English Language Level and key next steps in English literacy.
5. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to adapt the learning to be accessible to the EAL pupil in class to support them in fully accessing the curriculum. The class teacher should use the English Language Level Framework to identify strategies to use in their class. The framework is saved in the shared area (O:\Blairdardie\Staff\EAL\Resources) or can be accessed online at <https://www.goglasgow.org.uk/Pages/View/171> and is regularly updated by the Glasgow EAL team. It is the EAL Champion's responsibility to ensure the up-to-date framework is saved in the shared area.

English Language Assessments

When a new EAL pupil enrolls in the school, questions are asked to elucidate background information which may have not been captured during the enrolment process. These can include:

- What language(s) do you speak?
- Who do you live with?
- Do you have any brothers and sister? (How old are they?)
- What language(s) do you speak with your different family members?
- What country were you born in?
- When did you move to Scotland?
- Where did you live before you moved to Scotland?
- Did you go to school before you came to Blairdardie?

The ELL assessment can then take place which includes a talking and listening section, reading task and writing task. Teacher judgement is used to alter the difficulty of the questions/tasks.

The English Language Assessments should be completed twice a year – once at the start before the initial tracking meetings and again before the final tracking meeting. It may not be necessary to complete another comprehensive English Language Level assessment, and instead the class teacher should use their understanding and knowledge of the learner to update the competency profile during the tracking meeting.

Home Language Assessments

If the class teacher has concerns of any additional support needs and it is unclear whether this is due to an underlying factor or the level of English known, a first language assessment can be completed by the EAL champion or SLT.

First, the family are contacted and information is collected regarding the educational background and developmental milestones of the child, as well as any other concerns (or lack thereof) the family may have.

The first language assessment can then take place with the support of an interpreter. The evidence is collated and passed back to the class teacher and SLT, with any gaps in home language or evidence of additional support needs highlighted. Parental permission is required for this assessment to take place.

Young Interpreter Scheme

The Young Interpreter Scheme is a programme that trains groups of pupils to be Young Interpreters, who act as a good role model and guide to EAL learners new to Blairdardie. The Young Interpreters support the EAL pupils socially during break and lunch time, give tours of the school, check how they are settling in, demonstrate routines, help the EAL pupils to communicate any problems and are empathetic buddies.

Potential Young Interpreters are identified by their class teachers, and should be empathetic, friendly and caring, good listeners, good role-models, and familiar with the school's routines. The Young Interpreters can be either by monolingual, multilingual or EAL themselves.

Young Interpreters should not be involved with the following:

- Replacing professional interpreters
- Interpreting in class when a new academic concept is being taught
- Interpreting during formal situations such as parent-teacher meetings or confidential issues
- Support during screening assessments or national tests

The Young Interpreter co-ordinator(s) are responsible for ensuring the Young Interpreters are trained properly and regularly met with in order to support them in assisting the EAL pupils. They are also responsible for ensuring the scheme runs within the intended parameters, while ensuring the safeguarding and wellbeing of the Young Interpreters.