



THE ORATORY

THE ORATORY SCHOOL (OS)

EAL Policy

Policy Owner:	Head of EAL
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Regulatory Body* (if a regulatory policy)	DfE
Relevant Legislation* (if a regulatory policy)	ISI regulations para 32(3)(b)
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Linked policies	Curriculum Policy

The Oratory School aims to provide equality of access to the curriculum for all its students, including those for whom English is an additional language (EAL). It aims to ensure that the language and learning needs of all students are identified and that they are supported in overcoming any language obstacles which might prevent them from achieving their full potential.

Specialist EAL teachers and graduate training assistants assist students whose first language is not English so that they can participate fully in all the activities of the school and grow in confidence. The aim is to give every student the opportunity to fulfil their potential at the Oratory School through the medium of English. The additional aim is to ensure that students are provided with a strong enough grounding in English to thrive both professionally and in subsequent academic environments e.g. sixth form colleges and universities.

All students are encouraged to develop their written and spoken communication skills with appropriate fluency and register. There is great emphasis on learning vocabulary in context, developing reading and writing skills, improving grammatical accuracy, and learning study skills. It is also important that students develop a greater cultural awareness and understanding of independent learning techniques. The subject matter and language content taught in the EAL lessons is also aimed at underpinning and complementing the mainstream subjects being studied.

The courses are very practical and are designed to help students communicate effectively both in the classroom situation, in the boarding houses and in the community. Students are encouraged to read as much as possible; the librarian is happy to assist individual students in recommending literature and we also have library lessons for lower school students to help students develop their independent reading.

Heads of Department are encouraged to provide vocabulary lists of key terms / phrases that they would wish to be integrated into more formal vocabulary testing in EAL lessons.

Students for whom English is not their first language are assessed on arrival by our EAL Department and a programme of study is offered, based on age, level of English and long term aims.

The focus of the EAL Department is to provide additional help to overseas students in settling into English boarding school life as quickly as possible by improving their English and by offering cultural and mainstream lesson support. We also offer preparation for a wide variety of exams, such as the Cambridge suite of exams, Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language and IELTS. Students entering our 6th Form without the necessary qualifications for entrance to British universities need to join the two-year IELTS programme run by the department. This involves attending at least four group lessons per week. There is an extra charge per term for these 6th form EAL lessons.

Overseas students entering from 3rd Form upwards who score B2 or lower on their placement test are taught English as a Second Language in their timetabled EAL lessons. 3rd Form students follow a B1+ level course (equivalent to high Cambridge B1 Preliminary) and 4th Form and 5th form follow the Cambridge IGCSE ESL course. There is an additional cost for these timetabled classes. Students either follow the EAL course or mainstream English at our discretion, depending on our assessment of their ability through scrutiny of their admissions tests, assessment on arrival and further assessment at various stages of the course. It is possible for high-performers in EAL to move to mainstream English if they are assessed to be suitable to make such a move.

If it is the case that students are deemed to need further EAL support, either for their general language skills or for subject support, then this can be provided by a peripatetic teacher at additional cost.

The Head of EAL maintains a list of EAL students receiving support, which is circulated to all colleagues at the start of the academic year, and often at other points as a reminder. All teaching staff are required to be aware of the particular needs of EAL and overseas students, and to make provision for them within their taught classes. This is often as simple as ensuring that overseas students understand difficult words, both specialist and in the carrier language, and checking understanding of material.

The Head of EAL liaises with the Examinations Officer and Curriculum Support to ensure that Access arrangements are made for the use of bi-lingual dictionaries in tests and examinations, where students are entitled to these.