



Scoil Chonglais Post-Primary School

English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy



BORD OIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA
CHILL DARAGUS CHILL MHANTÁIN
KILDARE AND WICKLOW
EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

Mission Statement

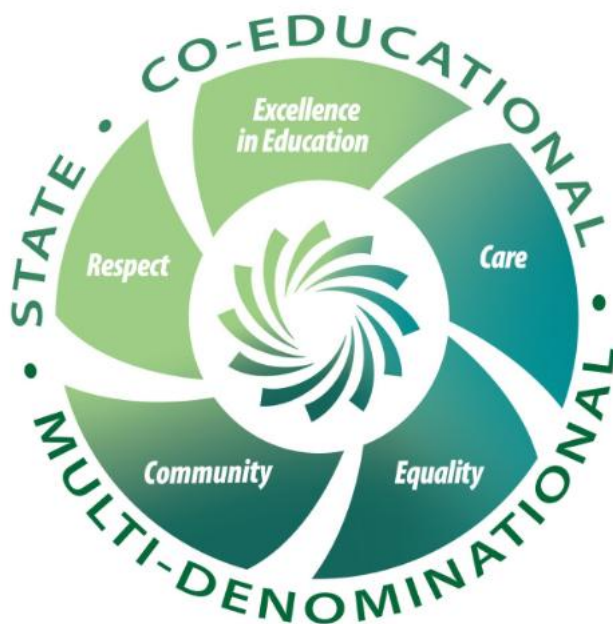
Scoil Chonglais is a warm, caring, and welcoming school in which all students are valued and respected. We provide a positive, supportive, and inclusive learning environment, where each student and their unique contribution is celebrated. We are committed to excellence in education and to empowering each student to reach their full potential.

School Motto

“Empowering Minds, Shaping Futures and Celebrating Success”

KWETB Core Values

Scoil Chonglais is a coeducational, multi-denominational post primary school, under the patronage of KWETB. Our school community is committed to our ETB core values of Excellence in Education, Care, Respect, Equality and Community.



Introduction

Scoil Chonglais is a co-educational, multi-denominational post-primary school committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment in which every student is valued and respected.

Our school motto, **“Empowering Minds, Shaping Futures, and Celebrating Success,”** provides a strong foundation for our approach to students who are learning English as an Additional Language (EAL).

At Scoil Chonglais, we recognise that students who speak languages other than English bring valuable linguistic, cultural and personal experiences to our school community. Their first languages and cultural identities are viewed as strengths and resources that can enrich the learning environment for all students.

This policy outlines the whole-school approach adopted by Scoil Chonglais to support students for whom English is an additional language and to ensure that they have meaningful access to the curriculum, school life and opportunities for achievement.

Rationale

Scoil Chonglais recognises that acquiring academic English is an important part of enabling students to participate fully in post-primary education and wider Irish society.

Students learning English as an additional language may require specific support to:

- develop proficiency in spoken and written English;
- understand subject-specific and academic language;
- participate confidently in classroom discussion;
- access the curriculum;
- develop literacy and study skills;
- understand the language of assessment and examinations;
- develop friendships and a sense of belonging;
- participate fully in extracurricular and school activities;
- maintain and value their home language and cultural identity.

EAL support is therefore regarded as an inclusive, whole-school responsibility, rather than solely the responsibility of the EAL teacher.

This approach is consistent with Department of Education guidance and Inspectorate findings, which emphasise whole-school structures, collaboration between EAL/SET and subject teachers, appropriate assessment and target-setting, and the creation of an environment in which students learning EAL feel welcome and experience a sense of belonging.

Policy Statement

Scoil Chonglais is committed to ensuring that students learning English as an Additional Language:

1. are welcomed into the school community;
2. are treated with dignity, equality and respect;
3. have their linguistic and cultural backgrounds valued;
4. receive appropriate support to develop English language proficiency;
5. have equitable access to the curriculum;
6. are supported to participate fully in school life;
7. are encouraged to achieve their full academic and personal potential;
8. have their progress monitored and reviewed;
9. are supported through collaboration between school staff, students and parents/guardians;
10. experience an educational environment that reflects our motto:

Empowering Minds, Shaping Futures, and Celebrating Success.

Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of this policy is to ensure that students learning EAL are enabled to access education and participate fully in the life of Scoil Chonglais.

The school aims to:

- provide an inclusive and welcoming environment;
- identify students requiring EAL support as early as possible;
- assess students' English language proficiency appropriately;
- establish individual language-learning targets;
- provide targeted EAL teaching where appropriate;
- promote language development across all subjects;
- encourage collaboration between EAL/SET teachers and mainstream subject teachers;
- support students' social and emotional wellbeing;
- encourage meaningful communication with parents/guardians;
- recognise students' home languages and cultures;
- monitor students' progress;
- review provision regularly;
- promote high expectations for all EAL students.

Definition of an EAL Student

For the purpose of this policy, an EAL student is a student whose first or home language is not English and who requires additional support to develop the English language skills necessary to access the curriculum and participate fully in school life.

Being bilingual or multilingual does not in itself indicate that a student requires EAL support.

The level of support provided will be determined by the student's individual language needs, proficiency, educational background, age, previous experience of English-medium education and ability to access the curriculum.

The Department of Education's current EAL support arrangements distinguish between eligible new entrants and non-new entrants according to specified criteria. Scoil Chonglais will follow current Department requirements when applying for and allocating EAL resources.

Admission and Identification

Information relating to a student's language background should be gathered as part of the admissions and transition process.

Scoil Chonglais's existing admissions documentation asks whether a student has previously received EAL support. Scoil Chonglais

Relevant information may include:

- country of birth;
- date of arrival in Ireland;
- home language(s);
- languages spoken by the student;
- previous experience of English-medium education;
- previous EAL support;
- previous school attended;
- literacy in the student's first language;
- educational history;
- relevant information provided by parents/guardians.

The school will use this information sensitively and confidentially.

Initial Assessment

Students identified as potentially requiring EAL support will be assessed as appropriate to establish their current level of English proficiency.

Assessment may consider:

- listening;

- speaking;
- reading;
- writing;
- vocabulary;
- grammatical structures;
- comprehension;
- academic language;
- ability to follow classroom instructions;
- ability to participate in classroom activities.

Assessment should be undertaken within a reasonable period following the student's arrival in the school and should take account of the student's age, educational history, strengths and interests.

Where appropriate, assessment information may be considered alongside the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). (Appendix 1)

Assessment will be used to identify appropriate teaching and learning needs rather than to label students.

Individual EAL Targets

Where EAL support is required, students will have individual language-learning targets.

Targets will be:

- specific;
- achievable;
- relevant to the student's needs;
- measurable where appropriate;
- reviewed regularly.

Targets may relate to:

- vocabulary;
- reading comprehension;
- writing;
- speaking;
- listening;
- grammar;
- pronunciation;
- academic language;
- subject-specific terminology;
- examination language;
- communication and confidence.

Students will be involved in setting and reviewing their targets where appropriate.

EAL Teaching and Support

EAL support may be delivered through a combination of approaches depending on the student's needs and available resources.

These may include:

Small-group support

Students with similar language needs may receive targeted instruction in a small group.

Individual support

Where appropriate, individual support may be provided for students with significant or specific language needs.

In-class support

Where feasible, EAL/SET teachers may work collaboratively within mainstream classes.

Team teaching

Where appropriate and practicable, EAL/SET teachers and subject teachers may collaborate in planning and delivering lessons.

Mainstream classroom differentiation

Subject teachers will use appropriate strategies to make learning accessible to students developing English.

The school recognises that effective EAL provision should not result in unnecessary withdrawal from mainstream learning. Current Inspectorate findings identify increased use of in-class support and reduced reliance on withdrawal support as approaches that can strengthen provision.

The Role of the EAL Coordinator

The EAL coordinator is responsible for:

- Implementing DES Language Support Guidelines;
- devise an appropriate language programme;
- create and file appropriate Student Support Plans for EAL students;
- plan appropriate assessment strategies;
- provide direct EAL instruction where appropriate to teachers;
- assist the EAL support teacher with monitoring student progress;
- communicate relevant information to subject teachers;
- support teachers in differentiating learning appropriately;

- liaise with parents/guardians where appropriate;
- contribute to transition planning;
- contribute to whole-school planning for EAL;
- support the integration of students into the wider school community.

Role of Mainstream Subject Teachers

EAL support is a whole-school responsibility. EAL students remain the responsibility of the mainstream subject teacher in post primary schools, who in turn work closely with EAL support teachers.

Subject teachers are expected to:

- Work closely with the language support teacher and EAL coordinator to set relevant and achievable targets for each student;
- provide appropriate differentiation within the classroom;
- use clear language and instructions;
- use visual supports where appropriate;
- check student understanding;
- allow appropriate processing time;
- encourage participation;
- use structured pair and group work;
- provide appropriate opportunities for speaking and listening;
- make effective use of digital technologies;
- communicate relevant concerns and progress to the EAL coordinator and EAL support teacher.

Teachers should recognise that a student may have strong conceptual understanding but may struggle to demonstrate that understanding through English.

Role of EAL Support Teachers

- Work closely with the main subject teacher and develop student specific targets;
- Promote the student's language proficiency and development so they can gradually gain access to the curriculum.
- Inform students and parents/guardians of assessment procedures and progressive targets put in place for the student.
- Assess the student's proficiency in English using both formal and informal assessments and maintain records of the outcomes of these assessments.
- Revise targets on a termly basis and report any concerns to the mainstream subject teacher and EAL coordinator.
- Help the student develop appropriate strategies and skills to support future education and life outside school.

Classroom Strategies

Subject teachers will consider the following strategies where appropriate:

- use clear, concise instructions;
- break complex instructions into manageable steps;
- check understanding rather than simply asking, "Do you understand?";
- pre-teach key vocabulary;
- display key terminology;
- use visuals, diagrams, demonstrations and models;
- provide word banks and sentence starters;
- provide examples of completed work;
- allow additional processing time;
- encourage peer collaboration;
- use bilingual dictionaries and appropriate digital tools;
- provide opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding in different ways;
- avoid unnecessarily complex language in instructions;
- explicitly teach the language of the subject;
- provide structured opportunities for oral language development.

Literacy and Academic Language

The school recognises the distinction between social English and the academic language required to succeed at post-primary level.

EAL provision will therefore support students in developing:

- subject-specific vocabulary;
- academic vocabulary;
- comprehension skills;
- extended writing;
- note-taking;

- summarising;
- explaining;
- comparing;
- analysing;
- evaluating;
- presenting information;
- understanding examination questions;
- interpreting assessment terminology.

Attention will be given to the language demands of Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle subjects.

Assessment and Monitoring

EAL student progress will be monitored regularly.

Assessment information may include:

- initial language assessment;
- classroom observation;
- student work;
- teacher feedback;
- formative assessment;
- school-based assessments;
- language targets;
- CEFR-informed assessment (Appendix 1)
- student self-assessment.

Assessment will inform teaching and be used to identify next steps.

EAL teachers and subject teachers will communicate relevant assessment information so that language development and subject learning can be supported together.

The Department of Education Inspectorate has specifically highlighted the importance of collaboration between EAL/SET teachers and post-primary subject teachers in assessment and target-setting.

Transition

Attention will be given to transition points.

These include:

- transfer from primary to post-primary;
- arrival of a student from another Irish school;
- arrival of a student from another country;
- transition into Senior Cycle;
- transition to further education, training or employment.

Relevant language and educational information will be shared appropriately with relevant staff to ensure continuity of support.

Meitheal and other student-support structures may also contribute to helping newly arrived students develop friendships, confidence and familiarity with school routines. This aligns closely with Scoil Chonglais's existing emphasis on welcoming and supporting students through its Meitheal programme.

Inclusion, Belonging and Wellbeing

Scoil Chonglais recognises that successful EAL provision extends beyond language instruction.

The school will actively promote:

- belonging;
- friendship;
- participation;
- respect;
- equality;
- cultural awareness;
- student voice;
- wellbeing;
- positive relationships.

Students learning EAL should have equitable opportunities to participate in:

- sports;
- clubs and societies;
- student leadership;
- school events;
- trips;
- extracurricular activities;
- student council activities;
- celebrations and assemblies.

The school will work to ensure that language barriers do not unnecessarily prevent participation.

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Scoil Chonglais recognises and values the diversity of languages and cultures represented within its school community.

Students will be encouraged, where appropriate, to share aspects of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

The school may promote diversity through:

- multilingual displays;
- cultural events;
- student presentations;
- celebration of international languages and cultures;
- library resources;
- dual-language materials;
- assemblies;
- classroom activities;
- student-led initiatives.

Students' home languages should be viewed as an educational resource and an important part of their identity.

This approach reflects the Department of Education's Intercultural Education Strategy, which aims to ensure that education respects diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions and supports inclusion and integration.

Parents and Guardians

Scoil Chonglais recognises parents/guardians as important partners in supporting students' education.

The school will seek to:

- communicate clearly with parents/guardians;
- explain the purpose of EAL support;
- provide information about the Irish post-primary education system where appropriate;
- involve parents/guardians in discussions about student progress;
- encourage parents/guardians to support literacy and learning at home;
- respect parents'/guardians' linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Where communication difficulties arise, the school will consider appropriate interpretation or translation arrangements in accordance with school procedures and available resources.

Student Voice

Students learning EAL should be given opportunities to contribute to decisions affecting their learning.

Students may be invited to:

- identify areas where they need additional support;
- contribute to language targets;
- reflect on their progress;
- identify strategies that help them learn;

- provide feedback on EAL provision;
- participate in student leadership;
- contribute to intercultural initiatives.

Student voice supports the school's commitment to Empowering Minds.

Resources and Digital Technology

The school will seek to provide appropriate resources to support EAL development.

Resources may include:

- graded reading materials;
- bilingual dictionaries;
- visual dictionaries;
- vocabulary resources;
- subject-specific glossaries;
- dual-language texts;
- online language-learning resources;
- assistive and digital technologies;
- multimedia resources;
- appropriate assessment materials.

Digital technologies may be used to support vocabulary development, reading, listening, pronunciation, communication and independent learning.

Collaboration and Whole-School Approach

Effective EAL provision requires collaboration between:

- EAL/SET teachers;
- subject teachers;
- year heads;
- tutors;
- school management;
- guidance staff;
- core team support;
- SNAs where relevant;
- parents/guardians;
- students.

The school will promote regular communication between relevant staff regarding students' language needs, progress and targets.

EAL support should be integrated into the school's wider systems for:

- inclusion;

- student support;
- assessment;
- wellbeing;
- literacy;
- numeracy;
- digital learning;
- attendance;
- guidance;
- transition.

Attendance and Engagement

Regular attendance is important for language acquisition and educational progress.

Where an EAL student's attendance or engagement becomes a concern, the school will consider whether language, cultural, social or transition-related factors are contributing to the difficulty.

Appropriate supports will be considered in collaboration with the student, parents/guardians and relevant school personnel.

EAL and Additional Educational Needs

EAL needs should not automatically be interpreted as additional educational needs.

Where a student continues to experience significant difficulty despite appropriate EAL support, relevant staff may consider whether further assessment or support is required.

Any additional educational needs will be considered separately from the student's level of English proficiency, while recognising that language acquisition and educational needs can interact.

The school will seek to avoid confusing limited English proficiency with learning difficulty.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Information relating to students' language background, immigration history, educational history, assessment and support needs will be treated sensitively and handled in accordance with:

- school data protection procedures;
- KWETB policies;
- relevant legislation;
- Department of Education requirements.

Information will only be shared with staff who require it for legitimate educational and pastoral purposes.

Success Indicators

The effectiveness of this policy may be evaluated through:

- student progress in English language proficiency;
- achievement of individual language targets;
- engagement in mainstream classes;
- student attendance;
- participation in extracurricular activities;
- student and parent/guardian feedback;
- teacher feedback;
- assessment outcomes;
- successful transition between educational stages;
- evidence of student belonging and inclusion.

Success should be considered in the context of each student's starting point and individual circumstances.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated where necessary to reflect:

- changes in Department of Education requirements;
- changes in EAL resource allocation;
- developments in inclusive education;
- Inspectorate findings;
- relevant legislation;
- school needs;
- feedback from students, parents/guardians and staff.

Ratification by Board of Management:

This policy was adopted and ratified by the Board of Management on: **21/09/2026**

Board of Management next review:

This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Management in **September 2027**

Appendix 1:

- Post Primary: English as an Additional Language: Post Primary Assessment Kit: [eal-fv_1.pdf](#)

