

Forum De-delegation: English as an Additional Language service

To retain a central EAL Team to maintain the high levels of support and response to Havering's maintained primary schools, the LA is proposing that the sum per EAL pupil de-delegated remains unchanged. It is proposed that £38 per EAL pupil be de-delegated in the financial year 2025-26. This would provide funding of £114,538 towards the costs of the team which would otherwise be put at risk should an insufficient number of schools decide not to buy into the service.

The percentage of EAL learners in Havering primary schools is continuing to increase at an accelerated rate. In January 2024, the Havering primary school population stood at 30.4% EAL compared to 22.8% nationally, representing a rate of increase from January 2023 that is nearly double the national average (1.5% compared to 0.8% nationally).

Through the national funding formula, primary schools receive £639.28 per EAL3 pupil so would retain 94% of their funding to provide support to their EAL pupils.

Rationale for maintaining a central team with EAL expertise in Havering

1. Demographics are changing rapidly

Havering's demographic is continuing to change rapidly with migration to the borough directly from a wide range of countries and from across the UK.

From 1st June to 1st September 2024, 105 Havering primary school applications were received from children transferring from abroad, of whom 41 were recorded as having no English. Children continue to arrive from areas of conflict, some of whom have benefitted from the Homes for Ukraine in-school teaching project, managed by the EAL team.

2. The service is well-used by schools

From April 2023 to March 2024:

- 33 LA-maintained primaries accessed the service for consultancy support and/or CPD. This figure does not include the additional ongoing support that was given to schools in response to telephone queries and emails.
- Delegates from 26 LA-maintained primary schools attended EAL networks and/or CPD with over 100 course bookings.
- The HES EAL resources pages are well used by Havering schools with key documents that can only be accessed via log in. Over the past year, staff from at least 22 LA-maintained primaries have accessed the resources, many on a regular basis.
- The centrally-funded Homes for Ukraine in-school teaching project for 2023-2025 is managed by the EAL team. Without de-delegated EAL funding, this precise targeting of need could not exist. This has benefited pupils in 24 different schools across the primary and secondary phase.
- With regard to academy buy-back, 22 academies (an increase from previous buyback from 20 academies) accessed the service. There were 43 bookings for EAL networks and/or courses from academy subscribers. The resources

area was used well with nearly 200 views by staff logged in from subscribing academies.

3. Fluctuating school needs could put the service at risk

Unlike other service areas which generate a more consistent level of need, EAL needs fluctuate across schools due to changing populations and the experience and expertise of individual staff. School demographics can change rapidly which, in addition to changes in staffing, can lead to needs arising where there may have been none previously. This makes it more difficult for the EAL team to project a guaranteed income to fund salaries. Without collective buy-in from schools, EAL support could cease to exist within Havering and schools would have to source support from elsewhere. The sum de-delegated from a school is an average of £2,937, which means the majority of schools would benefit financially from de-delegation compared to the cost of buying a similar level of service externally.

4. A discrete EAL service allows flexibility

The benefit of maintaining the current model, as opposed to incorporating EAL into the Hsis packages, is the flexibility of the support. Schools can request visits as and when required without having to allocate package time; they can request a number of short visits or online calls throughout the year which can be arranged in response to the admission of new children as opposed to full consultancy days which need to be timetabled in advance. These flexible visits can cover a wide range of areas from pupil-focused observations to in-house EAL CPD and/or teacher surgeries. In addition, the model for EAL networks, as explained above, allows for networking between teaching assistants as well as teachers, helping maximise the real expertise that exists amongst our EAL TAs.

EAL team capacity

The EAL Advisers are available to provide termly EAL visits to schools as requested by individual EAL Co-ordinators/SLT. Schools are reminded by email at least three times a year of upcoming courses and the availability of support.

The capacity of the team continues to be enhanced by a specialist secondary EAL consultant who is increasingly working with secondary subscribers. If needs dictate, her role could be increased to work with a greater number of schools including primary schools.

Across the three Advisers, all requests for support have been met and, to date, there has been no instance of a request not being met.

The offer for LA-maintained primaries:

- Termly consultancy visits on request (more available as required, depending on the needs of individual schools – may be virtual or face-to-face)
- Consultancy visits may consist of: development of the role of the EAL co-ordinator; pupil-focused advice/observations; in-house EAL CPD; teacher surgeries/trouble-shooting; EAL reviews
- Twice-termly networks for EAL co-ordinators and EAL TAs (one virtual and one face-to-face per term)
- Unlimited access to centrally-held EAL CPD (may be virtual or face-to-face)

- Telephone and email support
- Access to the subscriber-only content on the HES EAL resources pages:
<https://www.hes.org.uk/Page/147>

Impact of the EAL team:

The targeted work of the EAL team with EAL co-ordinators, class teachers and TAs helps schools tailor their provision to ensure EAL learners make rapid progress. As a result, pupils that start with limited English across all phases make accelerated progress in order to reach age-related expectations or close the gap towards this.

Havering is attracting considerable migration from other London boroughs, including families with limited proficiency in English, in addition to increasing numbers of displaced families arriving from areas of conflict with very little English. Central EAL funding will ensure that schools receive EAL support in order to meet the needs of these vulnerable children as and when required, including the management of the central Homes for Ukraine budget which has allowed for precise targeting of need via specially-commissioned in-class teaching support.