



Types of Classes

The English Speaking Playgroup/School (**ESP**) offers Parents & Tots and 5 types of classes at different levels:

- Playgroup classes
- Reading and Writing classes
- English as a Foreign Language classes
- Examination courses
- Private classes (Onsite and Distance Learning)

Potential students are invited to visit the school, and where appropriate to be assessed to ensure they are registered for a suitable class.

The **ESP** does not work with set curricula for non-examination classes. This allows us to meet the needs of each individual learner whilst enabling them to reach a particular level of proficiency by the end of the school year. Statements describing these levels are given with the information about each type of class.

Playgroup Classes

Playgroup sessions are in English and are suitable for children aged 3-6 years regardless of what language they speak at home. Children will learn and develop further their English language in a happy and relaxed atmosphere. Various activities such as painting, crafts, singing and games are offered at all levels. During classes there is also time available for free and imaginative play with our many toys, games and dressing up clothes.

The more advanced levels begin to introduce basic reading, writing and mathematic readiness skills.

Special care is taken to offer activities that enable each child to participate at his or her own level and ability. Children are encouraged to attend classes twice a week whenever possible to promote both language and socialisation skills.

By the end of the school year, your child should be able to:

- Level 1 ...pay attention for short periods
- ...listen to stories
- ...listen to, follow and sing a number of songs
- ...follow easy instructions

- Level 2 ...pay attention for longer periods
 ...listen to and respond to stories
 ...respond appropriately to simple questions
 ...show gross motor skills
 ...display basic numeracy skills
 ...sing a number of songs

- Level 3 ...concentrate for longer periods
 ...listen to and respond to stories
 ...show fine motor skills
 ...display a more advanced concept of numbers
 ...use English in songs, role-plays and games
 ...recognise the sounds, know and write the letters of the alphabet

Reading and Writing Classes

Our Reading & Writing classes focus on the four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. The lessons are challenging and enjoyable with an emphasis on activities that develop both oral and written comprehension from beginner to advanced levels.

These classes are for children who either already speak English in their home environment or have a very good level of English fluency. Children are individually assessed to ensure that they are placed in the most appropriate class for their age and ability.

The proficiency levels described here are intended as guidelines only. The teaching staff will be pleased to answer your questions about your child's capabilities and progress during the school year.

By the end of the school year, your child should be able to:

- Level 1 ...understand basic phonics
 ...recognise differences between the various vowel sounds
 ...write the letters of the alphabet correctly
 ...read and write simple words and phrases
 ...sight read commonly used words

- Level 2 ...understand the long vowel sounds
 ...write simple sentences with appropriate punctuation
 ...sight read commonly used words

- Level 3 ...understand groups of letters representing particular sounds
 ...read simple texts and answer questions
 ...write on a particular topic using a number of sentences
 ...understand the meaning of nouns, adjectives and verbs

- Level 4 ...complete logic problems
 ...follow complex written instructions
 ...memorise simple poems
 ...use irregular verbs.

- Level 5 ...read fluently
...express opinions about characters
...write stories using appropriate punctuation and grammar
...write summaries of books
...be of a high enough standard to be able to attend Cambridge English courses
- Level 6 ...research and correlate information
...understand complex grammar
...make verbal presentations
...possibility of starting an additional Cambridge English A2 KEY exam course
- Level 7+ ...present written arguments on a particular subject
...use English with confidence in all situations
...be of a high enough standard to be able to attend further Cambridge English courses

English as a Foreign Language Classes (EFL)

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes provide a fun way of learning and improving English language skills for 6-16 year olds.

For our older beginners and from EFL Level 3, classes follow the curriculum for Cambridge English Qualifications Young Learners scheme. For an additional fee, these children have the opportunity to take the Cambridge English: Young Learners test. All children taking a Young Learners test will receive a certificate showing their individual ability in English.

These classes are primarily for children who do not speak English in their home environments.

By the end of the school year, your child should be able to:

- EFL Level 1 ...develop communication skills in English
...follow a series of instructions
...recognise and write simple phrases
- EFL Level 1
Older beginners (8+ years) ...start to use English in real life situations
...start to recognise and use simple grammar structures
...take the Cambridge English: Pre A1 Starters exam
...move on to EFL Level 3 or 4
- *EFL Level 1
Youth beginners (12+ years) ...start to communicate in English
...follow a series of instructions
...take the Cambridge English: Pre A1 Starters exam
...move on to EFL Level 4
- EFL Level 2 ...ask and answer basic questions
...talk about themselves (interests, likes and dislikes)
...read and understand easy stories
...write simple sentences

EFL Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...speak more confidently on familiar topics ...read and understand more complex stories ...use simple grammar structures correctly ...listen and respond to written and verbal tasks ...use spoken and written English in small class projects ...take the Cambridge English: Pre A1 Starters exam
EFL Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...speak English with increasing confidence ...read and understand increasingly complex stories ...listen and respond to more complex dialogues ...start to recognise more complex grammar structures ...use all four skills (listening, reading, writing & speaking) in group work ...take the Cambridge English: A1 Movers exam
EFL Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...speak English with increasing confidence in familiar situations ...complete more complex listening tasks ...read and understand a variety of texts ...start to use more complex grammar structures ...use all four skills (listening, reading, writing & speaking) independently in group work ...take the Cambridge English: A2 Flyers exam ...possibility of starting an additional Cambridge English A2 KEY exam course
EFL Level 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...speak English confidently in a variety of familiar situations ...listen and respond to a variety of listening texts ...read and respond to more complex texts ...start to use more complex grammar structures with confidence (writing emails and stories) ...be of a high enough standard to take an additional Cambridge English A2 KEY or B1 PRELIMINARY exam course
EFL Level 7+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ...speak English confidently in most situations ...listen and respond to more complex listening texts ...use complex grammar structures with confidence (writing longer emails and stories) ...be of a high enough standard to take an additional Cambridge English B1 PRELIMINARY or above exam course

* This class is not currently planned for the school year 2021 – 2022. We can offer a class at this level if there is sufficient interest. Please contact the Business Manager at info@esp-bern.ch.

Examination Courses

These examination courses prepare pupils for the Cambridge English Qualifications A2 KEY, B1 PRELIMINARY, B2 FIRST, C1 ADVANCED and C2 PROFICIENCY.

These are internationally recognised qualifications and are accepted in practically all institutions and work situations where proof of English skills is required. They are also useful for those seeking additional help with, or exemption from, English lessons at local Swiss secondary schools. All children are eligible to take these examinations regardless of the language spoken by their parents or in their home environment.

All children are eligible to take these examinations regardless of the language spoken by their parents or in their home environment. These supplementary courses concentrate on examination techniques and are offered only to those students attending Reading & Writing classes (including EFL Reading & Writing classes), Level 6 or above. The **ESP** teaching staff will decide whether or not a child has reached a satisfactory standard to be able to benefit from these additional courses.

Examinations are taken at an approved testing centre, usually in Bern and the **ESP** will enter the candidates for the examinations as a group **ESP** entry. Examination fees are not included in the **ESP**'s term fees and will be charged as an addition. Examinations are usually taken in June.

For the A2 KEY course, this must be at least a weekly Level 6 EFL or Reading & Writing course.

For the B1 PRELIMINARY course, this must be at least a weekly Level 7 EFL or Reading & Writing course.

For the B2 FIRST course, this must be at least a weekly Level 8 EFL or Reading & Writing course.

For the C1 ADVANCED course, this must be a S2 or S3 Reading & Writing course.

The A2 KEY course and B1 PRELIMINARY course take place every two weeks and last for 1 year. The B2 FIRST course and the C1 ADVANCED course take place every two weeks and last from 2-3 years, depending on the progress made by each student. The C2 PROFICIENCY is open to students who have achieved a good pass at C1 ADVANCED and is a weekly course which lasts 2-3 years, depending on the progress made by each student. There is no requirement to attend a Saturday class for Proficiency students.

Private Classes

Our private classes are taught by experienced English teachers and are adapted to meet each student's specific needs, based on their level of English as well as on whichever skill(s) the student may wish to focus on. Private classes are available for both adults and children.

The classes for children normally last 45 or 60 minutes; classes for adults normally last either 60, 90 or 120 minutes, but other class durations are possible.

Distance Learning Private Classes

These private classes allow students to study remotely whilst still having one-to-one interaction with a teacher. These classes are adapted to meet each student's specific needs, based on their level of English as well as on whichever skill(s) the student may wish to focus on. This can include working on pronunciation, building vocabulary as well as grammar and examination preparation. Distance Learning classes are available for both adults and children.

Each class normally lasts for 45 or 60 minutes but other class durations are possible.