

Bilingual Education at EDW and BWA: Partnership FAQ

This FAQ, prepared by the PTA, sets out the current arrangements and practices in place for the BWA–EDW partnership in January 2026. It is intended to clarify how the partnership between BWA and EDW works in practice, to address common questions, and to correct several misconceptions that have recently circulated.

1. What is the Nature of the BWA–EDW Partnership?

The partnership between Belleville Wix Academy (BWA) and École de Wix (EDW) is founded on the principle of two schools, one shared community. It brings together two distinct education systems — UK state education and French private education — within a bilingual programme that has existed successfully for over 20 years.

Leadership teams may change over time, but the partnership itself is long-standing and built on mutual respect for each school’s legal, cultural, and pedagogical frameworks. Parents are informed before joining the bilingual stream, and throughout their child’s time in the programme, that the two systems are different and that the partnership does not seek to merge the two systems into one.

As in any school environment, parents and pupils may occasionally feel that certain aspects could be run differently. This has always been the case and is not unique to the current context. Since the partnership’s inception, such issues have been regularly raised, discussed, and addressed through agreed protocols between the two schools.

Differences in decision-making — including spending priorities, activities, or approaches — reflect the fact that each school retains autonomy over its own governance and resources. For example, in one academic year, a class may not attend trips that BWA organises where EDW chose to allocate the available funds differently. BWA will accept this position and respect EDW’s decision not to ask EDW parents to contribute additional funding.

These situations are not new, nor are they unexpected in a bilingual partnership of this nature. They reflect the reality of two systems working together while respecting each other’s boundaries, responsibilities, and constraints.

2. Why can’t parents contact teachers or leadership in the same way across both schools?

This reflects a fundamental difference between the two systems:

- EDW is a private school
- BWA is a state-funded school

In UK state schools, parents typically do not contact teachers directly. Communication follows structured channels to ensure fairness, consistency, and safeguarding.

BWA and EDW have agreed protocols, including:

1. Parents raise concerns via the school their child is registered with
2. The registered school leader has overall responsibility for the child
3. EDW has explicitly asked that BWA does not communicate directly with EDW parents and vice versa.

Both approaches have their own internal logic and have been respected by both schools.

3. Does EDW subsidise the school canteen for BWA pupils?

No, EDW parents do not subsidise the canteen.

For BWA pupils, the Mayor of London funds free school meals for all BWA pupils from Reception to Year 6.

EDW is currently invoiced £2.57 per pupil meal by BWA. EDW then invoice their parents for the meals and any surcharge is an internal matter for EDW.

4. Does EDW subsidise BWA classrooms or staff?

No. Each BWA pupil unlocks state funding, which covers direct and indirect costs, including staffing.

In the bilingual programme: EDW pays for its teacher. BWA pays for its teacher. Teaching time is split equally (50/50).

EDW pays rent and service charges under a lease for the space it occupies. This is a standard tenant arrangement and does not constitute a subsidy.

5. Can EDW bilingual pupils attend BWA clubs?

Yes, with one exception.

- Bilingual EDW pupils can attend BWA clubs, including paid clubs and wraparound care.
- The only exception is a small number of free clubs, which are run by BWA staff.

Pupils registered in the EDW A-stream cannot attend BWA clubs, as they are pupils of a different school and not educated by BWA. This is for safeguarding and GDPR reasons. This distinction has always been understood by EDW leadership.

6. Why is there confusion around boosters and extra lessons?

Boosters at BWA are typically offered before school (8:00am), or after school (3:30pm). Most boosters run by BWA teachers are offered as goodwill, outside contractual obligations.

For EDW-registered pupils to attend, pupils require permission from the EDW headteacher.

BWA has not denied EDW pupils access, always seeks permission from EDW leadership and respects EDW's final decision, even when inconsistently applied over time.

7. Has BWA ever encouraged EDW pupils to transfer schools?

No.

When families apply to BWA, they do so via the local council. If a place becomes available, BWA is legally required to offer it to families on the waiting list in priority order.

The decision of where a child attends school is always the parents' choice, never BWA's.

Movement between schools has occurred in both directions over the years.

8. Is playground equipment restricted by school registration?

No.

All playground equipment is available to all children, regardless of registration. Rotas may be used to ensure fairness.

BWA and the PTA have funded the vast majority of play equipment and playground developments.

9. Can EDW pupils formally sit Year 6 SATs?

To sit SATs formally, pupils must have a Unique Pupil Number (UPN). Only the pupil's registered school can apply for this.

Independent schools may enter pupils for SATs, but EDW has not chosen to do so. This is not unusual.

To ensure fairness, EDW bilingual pupils sit past SATs papers at the same time as BWA pupils, in formal, invigilated conditions, using published past papers. Papers are marked internally by BWA staff, which is additional work undertaken in the spirit of partnership.

10. What is the PTA, and how does it operate differently from the EDW APL regarding school affairs?

The PTA is an external registered charity with two primary goals:

- Fundraising: Raising money for "extras" the school budget doesn't cover—such as new books, playground equipment, and computing resources.
- Community: Organising events to bring children and parents together.

The PTA has no say in school management or provisions. PTA volunteers do not discuss school policies or issues affecting other children. Any feedback regarding teaching or school life should be raised directly by the parents concerned, through the School Council or via elected Parent Governors.

While the APL also fundraises and organises events, its main difference is its formal role in school governance. APL representatives are elected and officially have representative power for parents in official bodies (Conseil d'Ecole, Conseil d'Etablissement, Commission budget, etc.) in the same way that leadership, teachers, and students have representation in those forums.

Despite these different formal roles, the PTA and APL are close. Volunteers from both teams collaborate closely throughout the year, running joint events or volunteering at each other's events, delivering the successful, memorable moments that make our school community experience so special for both children and parents.