

Welcome to the Sidwell Street ESOL Classes!

We are very happy that you found us. We're excited that you're here. Everybody who wants to learn English is welcome. We have students from 33 countries who between them speak around 55 languages. We have classes for students at all levels, and all the classes are free. You are welcome try different classes until you find one that suits you.

We hope you'll like it here, and that you'll feel safe, comfortable and included. In our classes you'll be able to work on all your language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and improve your grammar. We're also certain that you'll find laughter, kindness and friendship, and that you'll learn as much from your classmates as you will from your teachers.

Our students come from a variety of places and have had very different life and educational experiences. You all bring your own individual skills, talents and knowledge to class. We'd love to learn about your life, but only if you feel comfortable sharing your story. If you don't want to participate in an activity, you can opt out. And if you need a break, you can leave the classroom whenever you need to.

Most of our teachers are volunteers. We work at St. Sidwell's for free because we love meeting people from different countries and cultures and learning from them. We feel honoured to form part of your learning journey. Many of us have lived in different countries, so we understand the challenges (and the joys!) of learning a new language. Our teachers have varied teaching styles and different ways of organising their classes. However, we share a commitment to treating our students equally, and to being kind, respectful, welcoming and compassionate. We are committed to nurturing your confidence and making sure that you feel valued and included in our community.

Our classes are non-accredited, which means that you won't have to take any exams. It also means that we can plan our classes around your needs and interests. We see this as a big advantage. Our classes will feel different to being at college or university. They'll feel more informal and friendly, but you should expect possible noise, interruptions, improvisation, issues with technology and equipment, and new students arriving unexpectedly. This might feel a bit strange at first, but we hope that you'll soon get used to our way of doing things.

The only paperwork you'll need to fill in is a short registration form. The information on this form will be stored securely in accordance with data protection laws. If you give us permission, we'll send you information about classes via email or Whatsapp Broadcast Lists – your contact details won't be visible to other students. We can give you a certificate or letter of attendance if you attend classes regularly. If you have any worries or questions about your class – or about anything else - you can talk to one of the teachers afterwards, or you can email maria@stsidwells.org.uk. For wellbeing and employment advice, you can also contact dropin@stsidwells.org.uk. We will respect your privacy and treat anything you tell us confidentially.

Thank you so much again for being here! We hope that you enjoy attending our classes as much as we enjoy teaching them!