



Gloucestershire Race Equality and Diversity Service

# English as an Additional Language

## Working with Beginners at KS1 and KS2

An information booklet for teachers of  
newly arrived pupils with little or no English

[www.irespect.net](http://www.irespect.net)

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# Introduction

**This booklet** aims to provide **information** and **practical help** for the **classroom teacher** when a new pupil arrives with little or no English.

The **Primary EMA team** members of the **Race Equality and Diversity Service (READS)** based at The Moat Centre, will always be ready to offer support and advice as soon as possible, but it will be the class teacher who will have the initial and main contact with the new arrival.

The booklet is divided into the following sections:

- 1 Gathering information**
- 2 Cultural differences to look out for**
- 3 Making your new arrival feel welcome**
- 4 Early days in the classroom**
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  - ii) Receptive language and communicating
  - iii) Basic topic areas
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Gloucestershire Race Equality and Diversity Service  
Primary EMA Team July 2006

What is the **pupil's correct name** and **how is it spelt / pronounced**?

Where exactly is the family from?

What is the **family's religion**?

?

?

Who is the **primary carer**?

Are there any **special circumstances** ?

*eg Is the pupil an asylum seeker / adopted / from war zone*

What **language(s)** are **spoken** in the **home**?

?

Does the **pupil read / write** in the **home language**?

?

## Gathering Information

?

?

Does the family **read / write** in the **home language**?

?

?

Is there a **dress code** or **dietary requirements**?

Does the pupil have **older / younger siblings**? Are they living at home / elsewhere?

What is the **parent's / carer's knowledge** of **English**?

?

What is the **pupil's knowledge** of **English**?

?

?

?

What **previous experience** does the pupil have of **school / pre school** in UK or elsewhere?

?

Are there **other family members / friends** living nearby?

?



Some children will **avoid eye contact** with teachers - in some cultures this may have a meaning other than an acknowledgement of listening

Some pupils may **nod their head to acknowledge you** but it does not necessarily mean that they understand you

Some children will **smile** even if being reprimanded, as this is a gesture of respect in some cultures

Some children will **avoid any physical contact** for cultural reasons

Some children may **not want to eat with other pupils** because they are only used to eating with members of their own family



## Cultural differences to look out for

Some children may seem **aggressive in the playground** or may show other behavioural patterns

Some children **will not answer** unless they know the answer – an incorrect answer, a guess, may mean 'losing face'

Some children may appear **tired or uninterested** due to environmental adjustments, stress or limited English skills

Some pupils may feel **written work is the most important part** of their work and may pay little attention to oral based activities

Some children may be **uneasy at the more liberal approach** to some classroom activities in schools in this country



Prepare the rest of the class by telling them a little of his/her **background and language**

Create a **welcoming environment**  
*eg display dual language texts, display*

Pair with a **responsible caring child** to help look after pupil at playtimes

Be prepared for a new **EAL learner** to remain **quiet** for a considerable period of time.

Be **clear** with instructions and requests.  
**Speak slowly but don't shout**

## Making your new arrival feel welcome in the class

**Practical activities** allow the newcomer to be involved alongside peers without pressure to **speak**

Group with **reliable, articulate pupils** to provide **good linguistic role models**

**Praise** achievement – be direct and **sincere** - show **enthusiasm**

Welcome pupil's responses with **sensitivity**.  
Don't criticise mistakes

Give pupil **enough time to respond** to a question

Be **tolerant** of pupil's behaviour and **avoid stereotyping**

Provide **bilingual and picture dictionaries** if available

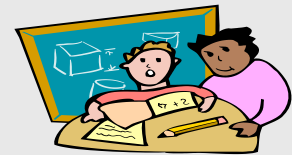
Provide **labels for everyday items** in the classroom

# Early Days in the Classroom

## Essential language

Basic words and phrases to enable the newcomer to function day to day and to express immediate needs in the first few days and weeks :

**Hello**  
**Yes**  
**No**  
**Please** may I have.....  
**Thank you**  
Goodbye  
I need to go to the **toilet**  
I like..  
I don't like  
Where is.....  
I don't understand



With a 'buddy' the EAL learner can **label different things in the classroom** to help him /her remember the words

Start an alphabet **word book** – with pictures for younger pupils – and add to it as a new word is learnt

Play **Circle games** or **Simon Says** which allow participation with the minimum of speaking

Have a **box of materials** ready to dip into eg games, puzzles, magnetic letters, wordless books, bilingual story books + tapes  
**\*see resource page**

Use **Classroom assistants** to take a **small group** to do an activity such as cooking, book making, embroidery, spelling or number games

Provide **magazines** and **catalogues** to **cut out pictures** to **sort** and **categorise**

Start an **All about Me** topic book. Take **photos** around school to **illustrate places, activities, daily routine**

**\*\*Take a look at Bristol EMAS website for materials to support new arrivals eg Playground fans\*\***









# Receptive Language and Communicating

The **EAL Beginner** will be **watching / listening** to you and the children in the class – it is **really important** to **support talk with visuals / materials / actions / gestures** wherever possible to **help convey meaning**.

The pupil will only acquire language if it is spoken and heard and if s/he uses it

**Create a need to communicate**



<b>Greet</b> people, <b>respond</b> to greetings	<i>Hello....How are you? Fine thank you....OK</i>	
Express <b>agreement / disagreement</b>	<i>Yes....No..... I like / don't like</i>	
<b>Identify</b> objects and people	<i>What's this? Who's this? This is a..... It's..... They're.....</i>	
Answer and ask questions about <b>physical characteristics</b> and <b>feelings</b>	<i>I've got black hair.. I'm cold / hungry / happy / sad ....</i>	
Answer and ask questions about <b>number</b>	<i>How many pencils?... I've got two sisters There are six boys</i>	
Answer and ask questions about <b>possession</b>	<i>I've got a ..... This is my bag.. Whose lunchbox is this?</i>	
Answer and ask questions about <b>where things are</b>	<i>Where's the book? (It's) in / on / under / by / behind..... The chair is by the table</i>	
Express simple <b>actions</b>	<i>What are you doing? What is s/he doing? I'm.....ing S/he's.....ing</i>	

## Basic Topic Areas

<b>Myself</b>	Personal details      Family      Feelings / Needs Home      Clothes      Food      Parts of the Body
<b>School</b>	The Classroom      The School Environment People who work in School
<b>Numeracy</b>	Ordinal Numbers      Cardinal Numbers      Number words Shapes      Size      Money      Time      Computation
<b>Other Topics</b>	Colours      Animals      Transport      In the Town / Country Occupations      Shopping      Weather



# Games for Beginner EAL Pupils

**Games can introduce new vocabulary, new concepts, use of number, social language.**

**Remember to include children in the group who will provide good language models**

Many of these activities / games will be already in school. Look in YR and Y1 classrooms and also the SEN department. Car Boot sales and attics are also worth raiding. Although aimed at younger monolingual children, KS2 pupils will be happy to play most of them when they first arrive. Other children will enjoy them too!

Games	Language / Vocabulary Focus
<i>Match –a – Balloon</i>	Colours, dice, your / my turn, throw, board, put
<i>Picture Lotto / Matching Pairs</i>	Common nouns
<i>Picture Snap</i>	Common nouns
<i>Sound Lotto</i>	Common verbs and nouns
<i>What Belongs Where ? (Spectrum)</i>	Common nouns, positional language, Where...? Home / In the street
<i>Animal / People Jigsaw Puzzles</i>	Parts of the body, clothes, animals
<i>Tummyache Game</i>	Food, like / dislike
<i>Simon Says</i>	Instructions, parts of the body
<i>Size Lotto</i>	Common nouns, language of size
<i>Teddy Bear Opposites ( Orchard Toys)</i>	Front / back, push / pull, over /under etc
<i>The If....Game (Philip and Tacey)</i>	Common nouns, food, transport, animals
<i>Teddy Bears Colour Match Express (Orchard Toys)</i>	Colours
<i>The house that Jack Built</i>	Colours, parts of house, shape
<i>Picture Dominoes</i>	Common nouns
<i>Press &amp; Peel</i>	Various common scenes – school, home, farm, shop, seaside
<i>Magnetic Storyboard with story packs</i>	Book language, common nouns, verbs
<i>Guess Who?</i>	Physical descriptions, clothes
<i>What's in the Bag?</i>	Any set of objects eg classroom equipment / animals / vehicles / play food
<i>The Shopping List Game</i>	Common supermarket items
<i>Any Dice and Board Games</i>	Directions, counting, taking turns



# Books for Beginner EAL Pupils



**Choose books** with very **little text**, but which are clearly supported by **strong visual impact** .

**The best stories, rhymes** are those with **repetitive** or **predictable storylines / refrains**

**Folk tales / traditional stories** often have similar versions in many cultures

**Wordless Picture Books** are ideal for “reading” in any language. They can be used to introduce new words or explain culture specific references

**Many stories** have **audio taped** versions to enable the pupil to see and hear the language simultaneously. You can also make your own tapes

**Non fiction books** can be a very useful way of **engaging** the **interest** of Beginner Level pupils eg books to share about home country / culture (if appropriate)

Books can be shared to **introduce / prepare** a **class topic** in school / at home and to reinforce key concepts / vocabulary

More and more books are being produced in **dual language text**. These are valuable for sharing with the whole class. and may be available on cdRom

**Interactive books** on cdRom or downloadable from the Internet into applications such as Clicker4 are becoming increasingly available and popular

\* see accompanying booklet **EAL and ICT** for further information

**Home made books** are **easy** and **inexpensive to make** and can be used to **support the classroom curriculum** in many ways. They can be both **fiction and non fiction**. They can provide an important **link between home / school** . **Bilingual / interactive versions** can be produced with help from home or other bilingual speakers



## EAL Learners and Literacy

**The basic principle is inclusion and having access to the curriculum**

**The whole class teaching** aspect of the Literacy Hour, with its **focus on joining in together**, using **repetition** and **discussion**, is ideal for the EAL learner

**Make sure** the EAL learner is **at the front** so s/he can see you and the text clearly.

**Use visuals / props / puppets / actions** to support texts

**Be consistent and straightforward** in the **language** you use – English is rich in synonyms and idiom  
eg Are we going to sit on the **carpet , mat, rug or floor?**  
eg If your pupil has learnt the parts of the body s/he may be confused by an expression such as **Give him a hand...** You may need to be ready to rephrase / repeat

**Remember** that there is an **enormous amount of language** potential in any text  
*See booklet **Working with EAL Pupils in the Literacy Hour** for examples of how to exploit a text for language learning*

**Place the EAL learner** in an **appropriate group for his / her ability**, whatever his /her level of English

**It may be appropriate** to use **Additional Literacy Support materials** and other intervention programmes set up in school

**If the group work is not accessible** to the pupil, use the time to **practice basic language** or **reinforce important bits** of the lesson, separately or with Support teacher / Assistant if available

**Shared reading and writing** sessions will encourage **involvement** in a non threatening way

**Remember** the pupil will be **getting a lot out of the lesson** even if s/he remains **quiet** or **appears reluctant to contribute**.

## EAL Learners and Numeracy

**Whatever their current level of English**, the EAL learner should be set into a **Maths group** which is appropriate for his / her ability range – **Ability in Maths should not be affected by language limitations**

**Make sure** your EAL learner knows the **basic vocabulary** for the aspect of Maths you are currently working on. If possible / appropriate, provide translations of key vocabulary

**Use signs and visual cues** to help him / her understand

### Useful Activities for children new to English:

Labelling	Word to picture matching
Word to word matching	Wordsearches
Picture to phrase or sentence matching	Filling the blanks
Sequencing – pictures / words in sentence / sentences / instructions / processes / stories	Grids / graphs / matrices
Surveys	True and false statements

**Spend time getting to know parents and carers** – it may take time and some perseverance but it is important that they feel **valued** and **reassured** about the well being of their children in the new environment

Becoming **more familiar with the family** will help you better understand potential cultural / religious / home circumstances that may need to be taken into account in planning an inclusive learning environment

It is important that everybody realises that **the development of the child's first language is vital in learning English** – talking about things in the child's home language with parents / carers will really help them to make sense of the English around them and build on the language they are beginning to acquire (see appendix *Bilingual Children, What the Research Tells Us*)

Where appropriate, **invite parents and carers to spend some time in school**. This will give them the opportunity to experience what happens and to be able to share / talk about activities with their child in the first language. Remember, **parents / carers may be feeling isolated in the community very different experience of school themselves**

## Partnership with Parents and Carers

Parents / carers need to **know how the education system works here** eg **learning styles, homework, PE kit, lunch arrangements, school trips, clubs**

Where appropriate, put parents / carers in touch with local providers of **ESOL classes** (English for Speakers of Other Languages )

**Explain newsletters / notes verbally** if at all possible as this will enable you to be sure that the parents / carers have understood the content and may help to avoid misunderstandings eg notices about parent consultation evenings, special events, trips, requests for extra help / items needed for a particular activity

**Information for parents may be available in other languages** – particularly the main community languages in Gloucestershire eg *Gujarati, Bangla, Urdu, Cantonese* – however, not all people who speak a language are literate in it, so it is useful if you can find another **family member / friend** who can act as **interpreter** if necessary. Contact READS for more information or iRespect website

Above all – **BE FRIENDLY** – a smiling face and a welcoming gesture can be worth a thousand words!

## **Appendix**

ii) Bilingual Children: What the Research Tells Us

lii) Scheme of Work Example

iv) Further Information

## The Early Stages of Learning English

*National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDIC)*

This outline of young children's learning of English as an additional language (EAL) has been prepared by NALDIC to inform judgements made by educators in assessment contexts. It draws on research findings. The process should be seen as cumulative and there will be variations in the rate of development according to environmental, personal and social factors.

Many bilingual children who are at an early stage in their learning of English go through a 'silent period' when they first enter an unfamiliar early years setting. During this time, children will be watching, actively listening, and exploring their environment to understand new experiences and to develop new meanings. They will be trying to relate previous knowledge to new contexts. It is important that children should not feel pressurised to speak until they feel confident enough to do so. However, it is essential that adults continue to talk to the children, to pick up their non-verbal responses, to support the child's understanding of meaning, and to involve them in activities; these strategies will help children to internalise the language they hear and to develop a sense of patterns, meanings and a range of language functions in their new, unfamiliar environment.

During this time, children may begin to use non-verbal gestures as a response to a question or to indicate need. Understanding is in advance of spoken language.

Many children may begin to echo single words and some short phrases used by adults and peers. All attempts at speech should be encouraged and praised.

There will be a development of formulaic language ('chunks' of social speech) eg "Mummy come soon." "My turn." Children may begin to join in with story refrains and repetitions and songs.

'Chunking' will continue, but children will increasingly begin to use one word utterances (frequently nouns) which will perform a range of language functions (eg questioning, responding, naming).

Children will begin to generate their own 'telegraphic' sentences, using two or three word utterances. Function words are likely to be omitted, the main concern being the communication of meaning. Non-verbal gestures will often accompany speech. Holistic phrases (development of 'chunking') will continue during this stage.

Children will continue to use extended phrases or simple sentences which contain surface developmental errors in the use of plurals, tenses, personal pronouns, function words and articles. Again, the emphasis is on the communication of meaning.

Increasingly, children will develop more control in their use of functional language. However, surface errors in the use of tenses, word endings and plurals will continue for some time until children understand the use of different grammatical structures in the target language, which may be different from their home language.

## **Bilingual Children: What the Research Tells Us** (from *Assessing the Needs of Bilingual Pupils* by Deryn Hall)

Children take up to **two years** to develop 'basic interpersonal communication skills' (playground / street survival language) **but** it takes from **five to seven years** to acquire the full range of literacy skills ('cognitive academic language proficiency') needed to cope with literacy demands of GCSE.

**A silent (receptive) period** is natural in the learning of a second language and is not a sign of learning difficulties in the first / early stages.

There are **developmental factors common to both native and second language acquisition**. Pupils learn roughly the same, regardless of their first language background.

Teachers / schools should have **basic information** available about the **language backgrounds** of bilingual pupils.

There should be awareness by all that a focus on mother tongue is a valuable channel to support learning and **not** a hindrance. **Teachers should not advocate the use of English only**, either at school or at home.

**Parents** should be encouraged to **share language and literacy** in speaking and listening as well as in reading and writing. This can be as **valuable in first / home** language as in English.

**Bilingualism** can be **educationally enriching** and has a **positive** effect on intellectual performance.

Bilingualism should be valued as a **special achievement**

Where there are academic difficulties, teachers should first critically examine the teaching they are offering in terms of motivation and the language used.



## Further Information

The **READS website *irespect.net*** is the recommended starting point for sourcing further information and advice about working with EAL pupils. It covers a wide range of essential Race Equality and Inclusion issues in Gloucestershire and beyond. It provides links to official Government sites, other EMA services and publishers.

### **Publications that have been recommended include:**

Speaking & Listening in Multicultural Classrooms	<i>V Edwards (Reading University)</i>
Reading in Multicultural Classrooms	
Writing in multicultural Classrooms	
Learning to Learn in a Second Language	<i>P Gibbons (PETA)</i>
Educating Second Language Children	<i>F Genesee, Editor (Cambridge)</i>
Assessing the Needs of Bilingual Pupils	<i>D Hall (Fulton)</i>
Guidelines for Class Teachers Working with Beginners in English	<i>Hounslow Language Service</i>
The Languages of the World	<i>K Khatzner (Routledge)</i>
Refugee Children in the Classroom	<i>J Rutter (Trentham)</i>
EAL Guide for Teachers	<i>F Flynn (TES)</i>
EAL Meeting the Challenge in the Classroom	<i>Liz Haslam, Yvonne Wilkin and Edith Kellet (David Fulton)</i>

